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KIRIBATESE: AN OUTLINE DESCRIPTION

by

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To

Professor Walter Munk

*without whom this work
would not have been written*

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The present work resulted from the activities of one of us (TRG) as 'informant' on projects at the University of Hawaii involving the Kiribatese language. It became evident that some preliminary thought and organisation would make the informant sessions more fruitful. As there was still lacking a satisfactory description of the Kiribatese language, we decided to present our thoughts in the present work. Except for RJ we are not expert linguists, and this work doubtlessly has many shortcomings. Nevertheless, we believe that we have succeeded in finding and describing many of the features of the language that will interest linguists and cause difficulties for students of the language. This work is therefore intended as an aid to descriptive and comparative linguists and to beginning and advanced students of the language.

As we progressed in the preparation of this work it became apparent that there was no convenient stopping place. Practically every section has ramifications that would take months or years to clean up. We thus abandoned the idea of postponing publication until a 'complete' work could be presented in order that students and linguists might benefit from the amount of materials which we have at hand at this point. A rough version of this work was circulated in mimeograph form a few years ago. Since then a few corrections were made and a little more information has been added. We are confident that we or others will improve this work, enlarge it, and present a more comprehensive description of the language at a later date. With this in mind, we shall greatly appreciate all suggestions and criticisms.

One of us (TRG) is responsible for the factual information presented. Another (GWG) did most of the writing, and the third (RJ) provided the organisational framework for presentation.

Our many Kiribatese friends have provided invaluable assistance, and it would be difficult to list all their names. We would like to thank Dr. Alolae Cati, Bwere Eritaia, Jeff Marck, H.E. Maude, Kaitara Meetai, Malcolm Mitz, Father Raimon, Stephen Trussel, members of the Vernacular Committee of the Kiribati Government, and participants in the Kiribatese (then called 'Gilbertese') study group at the University of Hawaii, for their help. We are grateful to Carol Misko and Gregory Hayward for their help with PEACESAT communications. Much of this work was written while one of us (GWG) was visiting Professor of Geophysics at University Sains Malaysia.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Kiribatese language is used today by about 60,000 people, including the inhabitants of Kiribati, which became an independent republic in 1979. This new nation contains the Gilbert Islands, B'aanaba (Ocean Island), the Phoenix Islands, and the Northern and Southern Line Islands. Before European contact,

migrations or military campaigns had already carried the language to Mili in the Marshall Islands and to Nui in Tuvalu. In recent times Kiribatese emigrants have taken the language throughout the territory of Kiribati, and to Nauru, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Some inhabitants of these places have become proficient in the language through contact with Kiribatese immigrants or migrant workers. In addition, many Tuvaluans are proficient in the language through contact with Kiribatese speakers during the time of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, when the two ethnic groups were included under the same British dominion. The language is quite uniform throughout, so any two speakers will have a mutual intelligibility of near 100%.

The language is one of the Malayo-Polynesian group of the Austronesian family of languages. It resembles many of the Micronesian languages as well as Polynesian. It is nominally classed as one of the Micronesian languages, and it is the most Polynesian-like of any of them. Like these languages, Kiribatese is not a tonal language. Some common roots occur throughout the Malayo-Polynesian area, from Malagasy to Easter Island.

In recent times (since European contact) words from other languages such as Tuvaluan, English, etc., have been introduced. The language may now be diverging in outlying areas due to the incorporation of words from the various local languages. The American missionary, Hiram Bingham, introduced some Greek words into his Kiribatese version of the Bible (Bingham, undated), and a few of these have survived as an integral part of the language. Since Britain established the protectorate over the Gilbert Islands in 1892 English has become the predominant foreign influence and provider of loan words. But until very recently Kiribatese was not really a dynamic language in the sense of rapid change through incorporation of new speech patterns, new vocabulary, etc. Among the majority of Kiribatese there is a strong tendency to stick to the traditional speech patterns. But on South Tarawa, seat of the Kiribati Government headquarters and containing about one third of the nation's population, Anglicisms are becoming more and more popular.

Kiribatese has a very loose or flexible structure which enables roots or bases to be used in many different functions (as nouns, verbs, etc.). The ordinary Kiribatese speaker, in fact, is seldom aware of the different functions his words perform. An exception to this overgeneralisation is the class of transitive verbs, whose rigid inflectional scheme unmistakably marks them as such. The description given here makes use of the traditional English terminology in describing function classes (nouns, verbs, etc.) and other features of the grammar (clauses, etc.) but this is done more for the purpose of aiding understanding for the speaker of European languages accustomed to such classification than for linguistic logic.

The written language dates from Bingham's Bible (undated), parts of which must have been in use by the early 1860s, and from his *Gilbertese-English Dictionary* (Bingham 1908), based on his transcription of the language into the Roman alphabet using 13 letters plus the apostrophe. The Bible is universally read by nearly all Kiribatese and is a strong stabilising influence on the language. Although the amount of written materials prepared in Kiribatese is small, the orthography is still not uniform. In the early 1960s as much as 98% of the adult Kiribatese population was literate in the language, but in the following years the emphasis on English and deemphasis of Kiribatese in the schools has led to a considerable reduction in this literacy rate (apparently without a corresponding increase of English proficiency). But educational policy has now changed, as elsewhere in the Pacific, and the local languages including

Kiribatese are now emphasised more in the schools. Thus, Kiribatese, important now in the region, may become more important in the near future.

The following description of the Kiribatese language is tentative. It is hoped that the inaccuracies found in this work will be corrected in subsequent works, and that the questions raised will stimulate further study and discussion.

1.1 Kiribati and its people

The large majority of the population inhabits the Gilbert Islands, which is a chain of low coral atolls and reef islets stretching in the NW-SE direction across the equator near the longitude of the international date line. The maximum elevation of any of them is only about three or four metres. There are about ten atolls, the largest being about 70 km in length, which consist of a thin ring of discontinuous land around a central lagoon. The amount of usable land is quite small. At low tide, when the wide lagoon mudflats are above water, the area of exposed land may be almost double that at high tide. B'aaanaba (Ocean Island), which lies to the West of the Gilbert Island chain, is different. It is a small limestone island having maximum elevation of about 80 metres. The land on all these islands consists of coralline (calcium carbonate) gravel and sand, with a very small amount of true soil.

The small and undependable rainfall is quickly absorbed into the coarse ground and forms a semi-fresh water lens that diffuses outward into ocean and lagoon. Only a few species of flora can grow in this environment. The main edible plants are the coconut, pandanus, and a taro-like root (te b'ab'ai).

The inhabitants have traditionally been subsistence farmers and fishermen, and even today only a small number of Kiribatese live by buying food from wages earned in other employment.

1.2 The Kiribatese language in the Austronesian family of languages

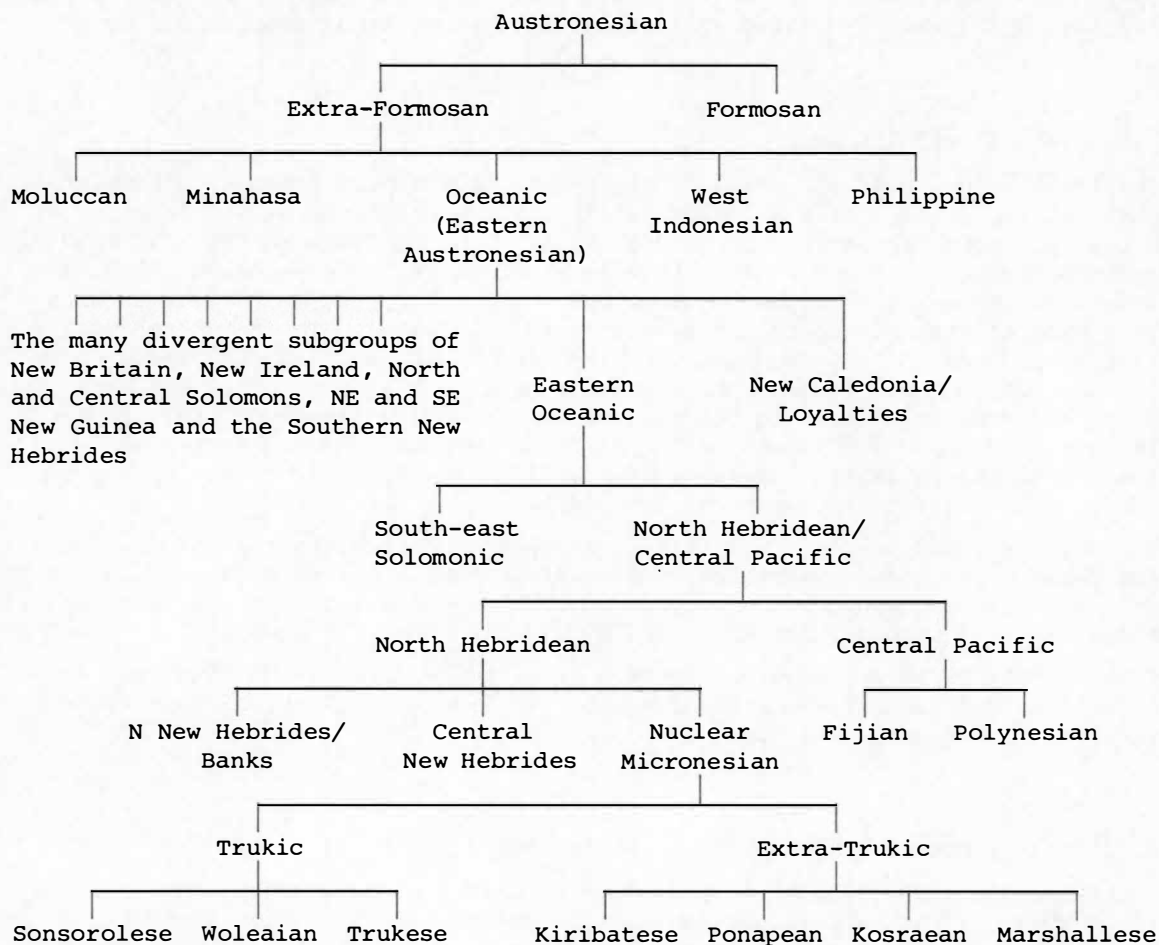
Shutler and Marck (1975) have studied correlations of vocabulary, phonetics and grammar of the various Austronesian languages, and tentatively conclude that they are related to each other according to the evolutionary tree given on page 4.

1.3 Dialects

There are two major dialects of Kiribatese. The Northern Dialect is used on Abemaama, Arunuka and Kuria and all of the Gilbert Islands northward therefrom, whereas the Southern Dialect is used on Nonouti, Beruu and all of the Gilbert Islands southward therefrom. The Northern Dialect is used on Mili Atoll in the Marshalls. The Southern Dialect is predominant in the Line Islands and the Solomon Islands, since these places are inhabited mostly by emigrants from the Southern Gilberts. In Vanuatu and other outlying areas inhabited by Kiribatese both dialects are used.

There are smaller island to island variations that might be considered as dialects. These variations consist mostly of differences in vocabulary and idioms rather than in pronunciation, and will not be considered here.

The Kiribatese language in the Austronesian family of languages



All descriptions given here conform to the Southern Dialect. The few consistent differences between the two major dialects are described below.

The main phonetic difference is that the combination *tu* is pronounced /*tu*/ in the Southern Dialect, /*su*/ in the Northern Dialect, as in the following examples:

word	Southern pron.	Northern pron.	meaning
tua	/tua/	/sua/	<i>law; rule</i>
matuu	/matuu/	/masuu/	<i>sleep</i>
tuanga	/tuanga/	/suanga/	<i>to tell</i> etc.

The only other important phonetic difference is that many words containing *iu* in the Southern Dialect omit the *i* in the Northern Dialect. This difference can be reflected also in the orthography, as in the following examples:

Southern	Northern	meaning
teniua	tenuua	<i>three</i>
i bukiu	i bukuu	<i>for me</i>
kuniu	kunuu	<i>my skin</i>

This variation often seems to arise because of differing treatment of the incompatibility of a terminal nasal with the initial vowel of a following word or affix. The diagram in section 2.4 shows several cases where alternative linking sounds are used. The tendency for the Southern Dialect is to insert i after a terminal n or ng followed by u. The examples noted above all involve suffixed words.

In addition to the differences noted above, there are isolated cases where some common words are slightly different in the two dialects, as in the following examples:

Southern	Northern	meaning
ngkoe	ngke	<i>you (singular)</i>
tekateka	takataka	<i>to sit</i>
teuana	touana	<i>one</i>

A very few common words are entirely different:

ngae	buu	<i>satiated; satisfied</i>
------	-----	----------------------------

1.4 Foreign influences

The language is continually being supplemented and modified by contact with other languages. Sometimes new constructions and words are introduced artificially, such as the many biblical terms introduced by missionaries. Usually the process occurs spontaneously. The ways in which foreign words are adapted into Kiribatese are outlined in section 3.3.

2. PHONOLOGY AND ORTHOGRAPHY

A complete description of Kiribatese phonology is beyond the scope of this work. The following brief remarks are intended only to lay the groundwork for describing the spelling system. It might be possible to propose other phonetic descriptions that would be just as satisfactory, and perhaps more satisfactory from the standpoint of phonological logic. The scheme proposed here is believed to be adequate and simple.

At the present time it cannot be said that there exists a standard spelling system. The current written materials consisting of mimeographed newspapers, government notices, personal letters, primary educational materials, etc., use an orthography that is not uniform, but this does not cause much inconvenience. These current spelling systems will be called 'the standard orthography' here. The variations encountered in the standard orthography are much narrower than those encountered in older published materials. This standard orthography is close to being a phonetic system; that is, there is almost a one-to-one correspondence between written words and their pronunciations, and the pronunciation of any given word is almost predictable from phonetic rules alone. But there are many cases where some knowledge of the language is required to find the correct pronunciation of a word written in 'standard orthography'.

The very small changes needed to make the spelling system truly phonetic are a small price to pay for the additional convenience. Without a truly phonetic system, dictionaries, etc. (i.e., Sabatier 1954) are forced to indicate the pronunciation of each word, as are English dictionaries. The spelling used in this work, which will be established below, has the advantage of being phonetic as well as close to the standard orthography. For convenience, we refer to it as 'the phonetic orthography'.

The basic sounds in Kiribatese are as shown in the following diagram:

	labial	dental	velar	class
stop	/b/	/t/	/k/	C
spirant	/v/	/s/		
trill		/r/		
nasal	/m/	/n/	/ng/	N

	front	central	back	class
semivowel			/'/ /w/	S
vowels {	high /i/		/u/	V
	medium /e/		/o/	
	low /æ/	/a/	/ɔ/	

The classes C (consonant), N (nasal), S (semivowel) and V (vowel) are defined as indicated above.

2.1 Long and short sounds

Each of the N and V sounds has a short and a long counterpart which cause a semantic distinction. In written Kiribatese this distinction has sometimes been made by using an overbar on the letter to indicate lengthening, or by using a doubled letter. The latter is more easily adapted to typescript, and is used here. Some text tends to not make this distinction at all. The economy gained by using single letters always, instead of double letters when indicated, seems very small when compared to the troublesome ambiguities that can arise as a result, as in the following:

e tamaaroa am ie	<i>your sail is beautiful</i>
e tamaaroa am iie	<i>your lovemaking is beautiful</i>
e reke ana taari	<i>he got some salt</i>
e reke ana tari	<i>he had an orgasm</i>

Long and short sounds are used to distinguish singular and plural of some nouns (see also section 4.4.1).

ika	<i>fish (singular)</i>
iika	<i>fishes</i>
tina	<i>mother</i>
tiina	<i>mothers</i>
mata	<i>eye</i>
maata	<i>eyes</i>

The same sort of distinction is used to differentiate singular and plural of some adjectives, but here the longer sound is usually associated with the singular (see also section 4.7.1).

ab'aab'aki	<i>big</i> (singular)	
ab'ab'aki	<i>big</i> (plural)	
anaanau	<i>long</i> (singular)	
ananau	<i>long</i> (plural)	etc.

The third person singular (referring to the direct object) of certain verbs has a lengthened nasal when the object is not expressed (see also section 4.8.6):

nima	<i>to drink</i> (something)
nimma	<i>to drink</i> it
tuanga	<i>to tell</i> (someone)
tuangnga	<i>to tell</i> him
kana	<i>to eat</i> (something)
kanna	<i>to eat</i> it

The imperative form of some verbs has a lengthened vowel as contrasted with the corresponding indicative mood (see section 4.8.3):

tei	<i>to stand</i>
teei	<i>stand</i> (a command)
wene	<i>to lie down</i>
weene	<i>lie down</i> (a command)
nako	<i>to go</i>
naako	<i>go</i> (a command) etc.

The second degree of distance of the singular form of certain demonstrative pronouns has a long n in contrast to the corresponding relative pronoun (see also sections 4.5.5 and 4.5.6):

ane	<i>that</i> (relative)
anne	<i>that</i> (demonstrative)
teuaane	<i>who</i>
teuaanne	<i>he</i>
baene	<i>which</i> (relative)
baenne	<i>that thing</i> etc.

In the third person object of some verbs, singular and plural are distinguished:

ataia	<i>to know</i> him
ataiia	<i>to know</i> them
nooria	<i>to see</i> him
nooriia	<i>to see</i> them
weteia	<i>to call</i> him
weteiia	<i>to call</i> them

Degree of length distinguishes some words from others:

man	<i>animal; letter; from</i>
maan	<i>a long time</i>
mama	<i>mouth-to-mouth feeding</i>
maama	<i>moonlight</i>
mmamma	<i>breast</i>
maamaa	<i>shame</i>

kan	<i>to want</i>
kaan	<i>near; almost</i>
m'am'a	<i>ring; kind of crab</i>
m'aam'a	<i>rings; crabs</i>
mm'amm'a	<i>to flake off</i>
M'aam'aa	<i>girl's name</i>
kora	<i>sinnet</i>
koora	<i>gold</i>
newe	<i>tongue</i>
nnewe	<i>lobster etc.</i>

(In such examples a comma is used here for separate alternative expressions for the same meaning, while a semicolon separates expressions having different meanings.)

Some proper names and place names have lengthened sounds that would be impossible to predict, even by a native speaker, if not familiar with the particular name in question. Radio announcers on B'anaa Kiribati continually misread names that are not written phonetically. Consider the names Tetaake, Beetio, Abemaama, Tiooti, etc. There are some words with lengthened sounds even though they do not contrast with corresponding words with short sounds:

takaakaro	<i>to play</i>
ngngai	<i>I</i>
kiika	<i>octopus</i>

When a short vowel or nasal comes into juxtaposition with an identical sound through syntactic combination, the result is pronounced long, as in the following examples:

e nang ngongoia	<i>he is about to scratch himself</i>
e rin n te auti	<i>he entered the house</i>
kam maaku	<i>you are afraid</i>
e na anaia	<i>he will take it</i>
ti iri	<i>we went along</i>
te katam'a arei	<i>that cat</i>
te eitei	<i>a frigate bird</i>

Sabatier (1954) proposed that there are three degrees of length in vowels, which he called long, intermediate and short. He used the circumflex to indicate the long vowel, no diacritical mark for the intermediate, and the trema (umlaut) for the short. As an example supporting this three-degree hypothesis, he put forth the three words *tâke grasshopper*, *takê to protrude*, and *takë duck*. He avoided the question of whether his three degrees of length represented distinct phonemes or merely allophonic variation. After discussing this point with various speakers, we conclude that there are only two degrees of length. In support of this we note that there have never been put forth any *minimal triplets* (distinguished only by the three supposed degrees of length). The foregoing example presents distinguishing features other than the degree of length of one vowel. If one considers the word *taake*, it can be rendered equally well by *ducks* (plural — see section 4.4.1) or by *grasshopper*. There is no difference in pronunciation and this, we believe, refutes the three-degree hypothesis. Thus, in the orthography used here, the three words are rendered as *taake grasshopper*, *takee to protrude*, and *take duck*. This is apparently a completely satisfactory scheme.

The juxtaposition of three identical N or V sounds, or of a long and a short, produces merely the simple long sound. Examples:

n na tang ngngai	<i>I'm going to cry</i>
e tii iri	<i>he just went along</i>
am mm'akuri	<i>your work</i>
ara aama	<i>our hammer</i>
an nneia	<i>go ahead and put it away</i>
n na kawariingkamii i nanon 3	<i>I'll meet you within 3 days</i>
te bong	

The following is an example with contrast in meaning but no contrast in pronunciation:

a anaia	<i>they took it</i>
a a anaia	<i>they are taking it</i>

2.2 APPROXIMATE PRONUNCIATION OF THE PHONEMES

The labial stop /b/ is unaspirated and almost unvoiced. To native English speakers the sound may approximate the b more than the p, but to speakers of languages without aspirated stops the sound is closer to p than to b. The representation of this sound in writing has been done with both b and p, with the majority favouring b in recent text. The b is used herein, and has been recommended by the KLB.

The dental stop /t/ is always unvoiced and unaspirated. It has always been represented in text by the letter t, which is also used to represent the sound /s/ because the two sounds are apparently allophones of the same phoneme (see below). The t is used herein, and is recommended by the KLB.

The velar stop /k/ is always unvoiced and unaspirated. It has always been represented by the letter k, which is used herein and recommended by the KLB.

The labial spirant /v/ is voiced, and is actually articulated with the upper teeth and lower lip, in about the same way as English v, except that the /v/ is softer and pronounced with less friction and freer, less intense flow than English v. It has always been represented by the letter w, although the latter is also used to represent /w/. The sound /v/ evidently occurs only in certain restricted phonetic environments, perhaps only when followed by /a/ or /e/. The combination wi occurs often in Kiribatese text, but this may be mistakenly written for /ui/. (Whether or not that is the case is still being debated, and the KLB is still considering how to recommend writing words that customarily have been written with wi.) The combination /wo/ apparently is used only in a few words of foreign origin (as in wooreba for *wolf*), while the combination /wu/ perhaps does not occur at all. Although the justification for representing both /v/ and /w/ by w is not clear, probably no confusion results because the two sounds apparently always occur in different phonetic environments. (Examples, /vaa/ and /bwee/ are rendered by waa and bwee, respectively, by the KLB and in the orthography used herein.)

The dental spirant /s/ is an allophone of the phoneme having the sound /t/ in other phonetic environments. This is borne out by the complete lack of contrasting pairs, and also by inflection patterns such as

kam'aitii	/kam'aisii/	<i>to increase them</i>
kam'aita	/kam'aita/	<i>to increase (something)</i>

The /t/ sound results when the following vowel is /a/, /e/ or /o/, whereas the /s/ sound results when the following vowel is /i/. When the following vowel is /u/ the Northern dialect uses /s/ while the Southern dialect uses /t/, and this fact also substantiates the fact that only one phoneme is involved. Also, the difference in sound between them is not quite as marked as one would expect from the above oversimplified diagram. The /s/ exhibits fairly wide variation in pronunciation by different individuals and in different phonetic environments. It is sometimes pronounced with a slight stop before the air flow is released, but it is still fairly well approximated by the English sound /s/. The letter t is used to represent both sounds, in accordance with the system introduced by Bingham, and is recommended by the KLB and is used herein.

The dental trill /r/ is produced by a single hard flip of the tongue. In the initial position it sounds almost as hard as the English d. It has always been represented by the letter r, which is recommended by the KLB and is used herein.

The nasals /m/, /n/ and /ng/ are nearly the same as their English counterparts, except that /n/ at end of a word is usually formed with the tongue between the teeth. It should be remembered that /ng/ represents the sound in *singer*, not in *finger*. The /m/ and /n/ have always been represented by the respective letters m and n, which are used herein also, but the /ng/ has been variously represented by ñ, g and ng. The last is far more popular in modern text, and what is recommended by KLB and used herein.

The /' / occurs only in restricted phonetic environments. It is always followed by /a/, and always preceded by /b/ or /m/. The resulting sounds /b'a/ and /m'a/ differ from the corresponding /ba/ and /ma/ in a manner that can be described in various ways. None of the above combinations sounds much like a diphthong, but the vowel component of /ba/ and /ma/ glides somewhat more than in the counterparts with /'/. The glide is from a tongue position slightly front of central, toward the central position. The beginning of this glide is almost as far forward as /æ/. Among the possible alternative representations that might be used is that of introducing an additional vowel phoneme (for distinguishing /a/ from /'a/) or of introducing an additional consonant phonemes (to distinguish /b/ and /m/ from /b'/ and /m'/). There may be more linguistic justification for the latter alternative, even though it is less economical than the former. In any case there is still uncertainty regarding this point. A similar phenomenon occurs in other Pacific languages, and the origin and proper representation of the phenomenon should probably be determined by considering all languages in which it occurs. For now, the reader is asked simply to accept the phonetic rendering presented here with the realisation that it is a simplified, rather than a logical system. In written Kiribatese the /' / has sometimes been indicated by the letter w (rarely), and sometimes by the apostrophe, and is often omitted entirely. The apostrophe is used here, although without complete satisfaction or conviction. The KLB also uses the apostrophe. If deleted it can lead to troublesome or embarrassing ambiguities such as

ko maan ikekei?	<i>were you there a long time?</i>
ko m'aan ikekei?	<i>did you make love there?</i>

The following additional contrasting pairs illustrate the semantic effect of this sound:

bati	<i>many</i>
b'ati	<i>bus</i>
maaka	<i>to fear</i>
m'aaka	<i>power, ability</i>

mama	<i>mouth-to-mouth feeding (as to feed infants)</i>
m'am'a	<i>ring; kind of crab</i>
baa	<i>leaf; thunder</i>
b'aa	<i>oil; rock</i>

There is a reluctance to form words that contain both (/ba/ or /ma/) and (/b'a/ or /m'a/). The rare cases where this does occur are probably restricted to combination of stable, universally-used roots (e.g., nimam'angko *five cups*).

The /w/ is also used in extremely limited phonetic environments, always preceded by /b/ or /m/, and always followed by /e/ or /i/. The four resulting pairs,

/bue/	/bwe/
/bui/	/bwi/
/mue/	/mwe/
/mui/	/mwi/

have definitely distinct pronunciations, but apparently only the first pair has any semantic difference. The other three pairs can apparently be freely interchanged without any change of meaning, but the usual pronunciation corresponds more often to the member with /w/ than to the one with /u/. Thus there are only five semantically distinct combinations in use, namely, /bue/, /bwe/, /bwi/, /mwe/, and /mwi/. The semantic effect of /u/ and /w/ in the first pair can be seen from the following example:

be	<i>conceited, flirtatious, overfamiliar</i>
bwe	<i>paddle, oar</i>
bue	<i>hot</i>

Other examples are rare.

It may be logical to consider the /' / and the /w/ as allophones of the same phoneme. This might be justified by the following facts:

- there can be no contrasting pairs, as they occur in mutually-exclusive phonetic environments,
- the sounds represented by them are somewhat similar,
- in grammatical variations, such as the conjugation of some verbs (see group 11 in Appendix A1), an analogous semantic effect is produced by both sounds,
- in the phonetic modifications required between the terminal /m/ and ' following vowels (see section 2.4) both sounds play an analogous role.

It therefore seems to us that there is good reason to drop the apostrophe in favour of the w, because of convenience in typescript, telegraphy, etc., as in the following examples:

skeletal spelling	phonetic spelling	proposed spelling	English
makuri	mm'akuri	mmwakuri	<i>work</i>
ba	b'a	bwa	<i>that (conj.)</i>
mama	m'am'a	mwamwa	<i>ring</i>
mama	mm'amm'a	mmwammwa	<i>to crumble</i>
baka	b'aka	bwaka	<i>to fall</i>
batika	b'aatika	bwaatika	<i>bicycle</i>

This proposal would meet considerable opposition, and it will not be mentioned further. The *skeletal* and *phonetic* orthographies are discussed further in section 2.7.

The /e/, /i/, /o/ and /u/ do not present serious difficulty, and have always been represented by the corresponding letters in written text. The /a/ is somewhat more frontal than the English sound *bomb*, but not as far as /æ/, as in *mat*. For that reason, the diagram in section 2.0 shows the sound somewhat displaced from the central column. In addition, there is a slight diphthongisation with the beginning somewhat more frontal than the end of the sound. It has always been represented by the letter a, which is used herein and recommended by the KLB.

The /æ/ and /ɔ/ do not contrast semantically with /a/ and /o/, respectively, and are not represented by distinct letters. These sounds occur only in diphthongs and will be discussed in the following section.

2.2.1 Diphthongs

Vowels are usually given full value regardless of phonetic environment. But when two or more vowels occur together there is frequently a glide between them. In many diphthongs this glide is frequently shorter than would be expected. This is particularly true in case of the combinations ao and ae. Although the initial sound /a/ is indicated in both cases, it is closer to /ɔ/ and /æ/, respectively. The glide then stops somewhat short of the indicated terminal sounds /o/ and /e/. The glide is so short that the resulting sounds /ɔ/ or /æ/ may sound almost pure. That is why these sounds are included in the table of section 2.0, although it is not suggested that they represent phonemes. Bingham evidently did not consider these sounds as phonemes, since he did not suggest indicating them with special symbols. (All other sounds indicated in the table represent phonemes, with /t/ and /s/, and perhaps also the /' / and /w/, representing single phonemes.)

The sounds of diphthongs have a peculiar quality. Bingham used the word 'mellifluous' to describe the effect, and others have noted the peculiar Kiribatese 'vowel shading'. The diphthongs ae and ai are distinctly different from each other, as are ao and au.

In the following examples the indicated pronunciations are only approximate, and where two alternatives are given the actual pronunciation lies somewhere in between:

ao	/aɔ/ or /ɔo/	<i>and</i>
tao	/taɔ/ or /tɔo/	<i>maybe</i>
taoo	/taɔo/ or /tɔoo/	<i>saw</i>
kao	/kaɔ/ or /kɔo/	<i>or</i>
a oki	/aɔki/ or /ɔoki/	<i>they returned</i>
ae	/æ/	<i>that</i> (relative pronoun)
tae	/tæ/	<i>to face</i>
ngae	/ngæ/ or /ngæe/	<i>satiated</i>
a ewe	/æwe/ /æwe/	<i>they jumped</i>
maeao	/mæao/	<i>west</i>

2.3 Permitted and prohibited combinations

Vowels can be juxtaposed without restriction, which can result in 'vowel clusters' of considerable and perhaps unlimited length. For example:

iai aia aia aiaia iaaia	<i>their enemies had their firewood</i>
	<i>under them</i>
iai uoua aia uee ao aua	<i>they had two flowers and four sails</i>
aia ie	
a aoi aia uee iaoia	<i>their flowers on them had dew</i>

Vowels can occur next to any other sound (except the S sounds, as indicated in section 2.0). Consonants cannot end a word, and cannot be followed by a nasal. These prohibited combinations can be indicated by CC, CN and CO (where O represents the empty set). Some selected examples of these prohibited combinations are rk, rt, tr, tn, bm, kng, -k, -t, -r, etc. (where the '-' stands for any sound).

The combinations NN are permitted or not according to the following table:

		second element		
		m	n	ng
first element {	m	+	+	+
	n	-	+	-
	ng	-	-	+

Or, stated differently, m can be followed by any nasal, while any other nasal can be followed only by itself (forming the lengthened sound). Other combinations of nasal with nasal are prohibited. The prohibited combinations are nm, nng, ngn, ngm. When such forbidden combinations are formed through syntactic combination an i is inserted between them as in the following examples:

tan + mai = tanimai	<i>turn + here = turn toward me</i>
an + ngongoai = ani ngongoai	<i>please + scratch me = please scratch me</i>
ang + maeao = angi maeao	<i>wind + west = wind from the west</i>
nang + nako = nangi nako	<i>be about to + go = be about to go</i>

There is no uniformity on how the phonetic addition of i has been handled in written text. It has sometimes been omitted entirely, sometimes joined to the first member, sometimes joined between them. The following examples illustrate the permitted juxtapositions of nasals:

am maa	<i>your fishtrap</i>
kam matuu	<i>you slept</i>
taamnei	<i>picture</i>
kam nooria	<i>you saw it</i>
kam ngongo	<i>you itched</i>
am ngake	<i>your underwear</i>
an nako	<i>go ahead and go</i>
tan nako	<i>turn away from me</i>
ngngai	<i>I</i>
eng ngaia	<i>yes, that's it</i>

The combinations NC are permitted or not according to the following table

		second element				
		b	k	r	t	w
First element {	m	+	+	+	+	+
	n	-	-	+	+	-
	ng	-	+	-	-	-

As before, *m* can be followed by any of the consonants. The others follow a seemingly unpredictable pattern. Point of articulation is obviously important but is apparently not the only determining factor in view of the fact that *mk* is permitted. The prohibited combinations are *nb*, *nk*, *nw*, *ngb*, *ngr*, *ngt*, *ngw*. If such forbidden pairs are formed by contact through syntactic combination an *i* must be inserted between them, as was done between two incompatible nasals, as is illustrated in the following examples:

taian + boki = taiani boki	<i>some + book = some books</i>
taan + koikoi = taani koikoi	<i>agent prefix + to grate = graters</i>
taian + waa = taiani waa	<i>some + canoe = some canoes</i>
nang + b'aka = nangi b'aka	<i>about to + fall = about to fall</i>
nang + roo = nangi roo	<i>about to + dark = about to be dark</i>
tang + tang = tangitang	<i>cry + cry = complain</i>
nang + tekateka = nangi tekateka	<i>about to + sit down = about to sit down</i>
nang + tiku = nangi tiku	<i>about to + land = about to land</i>
nang + wene = nangi wene	<i>about to + lie down = about to lie down</i>

The following examples illustrate the permitted combinations:

mb'a	<i>kiss</i>
am ben	<i>your coconut</i>
mka	<i>rotten</i>
kam kinaa	<i>you recognised</i>
am ran	<i>your water</i>
kam rauu	<i>you were jealous</i>
am taara	<i>your towel</i>
kam tiku	<i>you stayed</i>
am wanawana	<i>your intelligence</i>
kam wene	<i>you lay (reclined)</i>
M'anra	<i>a place name</i>
taan roko	<i>the people arriving</i>
anti	<i>ghost</i>
e kan taraia	<i>he wanted to look at it</i>
ngkoe	<i>you</i>
nang kiro	<i>to be about to faint</i>

To summarise, let *V'* represent the class of extended vowels consisting of all sounds in class *V* plus the permitted combinations of *S* + *V*. Thus, *V'* contains /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/, /'a/, /we/, /wi/, and their lengthened counterparts. The permitted and prohibited juxtaposed pairs can then be represented as follows:

		second element			
		C	N	V'	O
first element	C	-	-	+	-
	N	?	?	+	+
	V'	+	+	+	+
	O	+	+	+	

The '?' means to refer to the preceding tables. The empty set *O* when initial indicates those elements which can initiate an utterance, and when final, indicates those elements which can terminate an utterance. Of course, all the restrictions enumerated in section 2.2 apply when '+' is indicated.

2.4 Terminal nasals

A curious phenomenon occurs when a word with a terminal nasal is followed by a vowel. Sometimes this produces a lengthening of the nasal, sometimes a lengthening of the vowel, sometimes the insertion of the sound *i*. These modifications are seldom indicated in the written text, but sometimes may be.

The orthography used herein does not indicate these additional sounds where they occur between words which are written separately from each other. Thus, the reader should always be wary in all cases where a word beginning with a vowel follows a terminal nasal. Where such combinations occur within a word, by syntactical combination or suffixing, etc., these extra sounds will be indicated. The spelling systems used in the past, including recent times, are not consistent in this respect. For example:

koom	<i>comb</i> (n.)
koomwia	<i>to comb</i> (v.t.)

The usual suffix is *ia* in this case, but since the root ends in *m* an additional *w* is inserted (see below). This is usually indicated. But in cases where the additional sounds result merely in a lengthened sound, the modification is not usually indicated. Another common example is

ten	base for <i>three</i>
wan	base for <i>eight</i>
ua	quantifier for general objects
teniua	<i>three</i>
waniua	<i>eight</i>

(see section 4.2). But the last two words have customarily been written *tenua* and *wanua* respectively. The phenomenon exhibits considerable variation, depending on dialect and phonological environment. The conclusions described here are strictly tentative.

The following table indicates the sounds added upon juxtaposition of the indicated elements:

		second element				
		a	e	i	o	u
first element	m	m'a	mw	(^w _w i)	m	u
	n	n	n	(₋ i)	n	(_u i)
	ng	ng	ng	(^{ng} _i i)	ng	(_u i)

The hyphen means that no element is added. Of course, the *w* in all cases represents /w/, not /v/. Where two alternatives are given, the choice sometimes depends on dialect (Northern or Southern), and sometimes on phonological environment. In the following examples the sounds within parenthesis are pronounced but not customarily written:

kam (m'a)	aira?	<i>what are you doing?</i>
tirotaam (m'a)	aei	<i>this mirror</i>
kam (m'a)	anaia	<i>you took it</i>
am (m'a)	anene	<i>your song</i>

The effect of the added sounds in the above examples is to replace the short *m* by the lengthened version, to lengthen the *a* (if short), and to insert the

semivowel '. In the following examples (-) means no additional sounds are inserted:

kam (mw) ewe	<i>you jumped</i>
am (mw) ewe	<i>your jump</i>
kam (mw) ewaria	<i>you stabbed it</i>
kam (wi) in	<i>you are constipated</i>
kam (wi) iri	<i>you came along</i>
tirotaam (w) i aon ...	<i>mirror on ...</i>
kam (w) ieie	<i>you sailed</i>
kam (m) oki	<i>you returned</i>
am (m) on	<i>your turtle</i>
am (m) ototo	<i>your composition</i>
am (m) oonimoa	<i>your chicken pen</i>
kam (u) un	<i>you were angry</i>
am (u) uuto	<i>your young coconut trees</i>
am (u) uto	<i>your young coconut tree</i>

(Note that the last two examples do not differ in pronunciation.)

an (n) anaia	<i>go ahead and take it</i>
taan (n) anene	<i>singers</i>
ran (n) aei	<i>this water</i>
kan (n) anaia	<i>to want to take it</i>
an (n) ewe	<i>go ahead and jump</i>
kan (n) ewe	<i>to want to jump</i>
kan (n) ewaria	<i>to want to stab it</i>
an (i) iri	<i>come on along</i>
kan (i) iri	<i>to want to come along</i>
ran (-) i aon ...	<i>water on ...</i>
kan (-) ieie	<i>to want to sail</i>
an (n) oki	<i>go on back</i>
kan (n) onimakina	<i>to want to trust me</i>
ana ran (n) Otauea	<i>Otauea's water</i>
an (u) un	<i>go ahead and get angry</i>
an (i) un	<i>go ahead and get angry</i>
kan (u) ura	<i>to be ready to burn</i>
kan (i) ura	<i>to be ready to burn</i>
kan (u) uee	<i>to be ready to blossom</i>
kan (i) uee	<i>to be ready to blossom</i>
te nang (ng) arei	<i>that cloud</i>
nang (ng) anaia	<i>to be about to take it</i>
nang (ng) anene	<i>to be about to sing</i>
naang (ng) akekei	<i>those clouds</i>
nang (ng) ewe	<i>to be about to jump</i>
e tang (ng) Ewii	<i>Ewii cried</i>
nang (ng) ewaria	<i>to be about to stab it</i>
nang (i) iri	<i>to be about to go along</i>
nang (i) ieie	<i>to be about to sail</i>
a kang (i) ika	<i>they ate fish</i>
e tang (ngi) Itaia	<i>Itaia cried</i>

nang (ng) oki	<i>to be about to return</i>
a kang (ng) on	<i>they ate turtle</i>
nang (ng) ototoo	<i>to be about to compose something</i>
e tang (ng) Otauea	<i>Otauea cried</i>
e tang (u) Uriam	<i>Uriam cried</i>
e tang (i) Uriam	<i>Uriam cried</i>
nang (u) ure	<i>to be about to open</i>
nang (i) ure	<i>to be about to open</i>
nang (u) un	<i>to be about to get angry</i>
nang (i) un	<i>to be about to get angry</i>

2.5 The syllable

A short sequence of phonemes (one or more) uttered as a more or less single pulse of sound is called a *syllable*. Kiribatese speech then consists of a sequence of syllables.

When vowels do not occur together there is an obvious and simple grouping of phonemes to form syllables. This is true also in the case of lengthened vowels, but at first let us exclude diphthongs and longer sequences of vowels from consideration. Then each syllable will contain one (long or short) vowel of class V' (as defined in section 2.3). It will include the following phoneme only if it is a nasal and only if this following nasal is not followed by another vowel. It will include the preceding phoneme if it does not belong to the previous syllable. Somewhat rarely, a nasal preceding the first consonant in a syllable is included also if it does not belong to the preceding syllable. Thus all syllables will belong to one of the following types: V', V'N, NV', NV'N, CV', NCV', NCV'N. The following are examples of monosyllabic words:

type V'	e	<i>he; she; it</i>
	aa	<i>yawn</i>
type V'N	aan	<i>the under part of</i>
	in	<i>closed</i>
	eng	<i>yes</i>
type NV'	ma	<i>but</i>
	Nnee	<i>girl's name</i>
	nii	<i>coconut trees</i>
type NV'N	mim	<i>urine</i>
	naan	<i>group, several</i>
	nnen	<i>the place of</i>
	mi im	<i>your dream</i>
type CV'	te	<i>singular article</i>
	kaa	<i>car</i>
	b'aa	<i>oil; rock</i>
	ko	<i>you</i>
type CV'N	kang	<i>to eat</i>
	been	<i>coconuts</i>
	tim	<i>drop</i>

type NCV'	mka	<i>rotten</i>
	mb'a	<i>kiss</i>
	ngke	<i>when (past)</i>
type NCV'N	ngkam	<i>I don't know</i>

The foregoing scheme is subject to verification.

With diphthongs or longer strings of vowels the situation is not as yet clear. the vowel sentences of section 2.3 are not understandable (see following section) if pronounced without some additional stress cues or perhaps syllabification, and further study is needed.

2.6 Stress, rhythm and intonation

These matters are outside the scope of the present work, but represent interesting possibilities for future linguistic research. To a first approximation, the stress is much more even than in, say, English, where primary and secondary stressed syllables occur in words. But stress is very important semantically in Kiribatese. For example, the long all-vowel sentences in section 2.3, if pronounced evenly and without variation in stress or intonation,

iaiaiaaiaaiaiaiaia
iaiuouaaiaueeaoauaaiaie
aaoiaiaueeiaioia

are intelligible, or at best, barely intelligible upon careful listening and analysis. However, when the same utterances are pronounced with stress as indicated by

iaiaiaaiaiaiaiaaia
iaiuouaaiaueeaoauaaiaie
aaoiaiaueeiaoia

they become intelligible. Each Kiribatese word probably has stressed and unstressed components which are practically unchanged in different phonological environments. If this is true, Kiribatese dictionaries should indicate the stress pattern of each word. Stress here may involve higher intensity (loudness) as well as alternations in pitch and rhythm, and is another fruitful area for study.

2.7 Orthography

The phonetic spelling system used herein has been described in the foregoing paragraphs. There is no other standard orthography in existence, that we know of, and the various spellings that have been used in the past and at the present time represent a wide range from the most streamlined up to a system, not very different from our phonetic system, which was devised by the Vernacular Board of the Kiribati Ministry of Education, Training and Culture around the time of independence. The major difference between the VB (Vernacular Board) orthography and the phonetic one is that the combination *ui* used herein is usually written *wi* according to VB. The various degrees of 'streamlining' that have been used merely involve the dropping of some apostrophes and the conversion of some doubled letters to single letters. (It should be noted that much older literature published by the Catholic Missions used *p* in place of *b* and some other minor differences.)

The VB spelling system has been in use during the early 1980s, but was dropped in 1982 by the Kiribati Broadcasting and Publication Authority because it had not yet been approved by the Kiribati Parliament. At the time of this writing (1984) there is an 'official' orthography which can be obtained from the phonetic orthography by some simple transformations:

1. Reduce all doubled vowels to their single counterparts.
2. Change ngngai to ngai.
3. Initial ui (in any syllable) becomes wi.

To obtain an even more streamlined, or *skeletal* spelling, the apostrophes are dropped. The following examples illustrate the three systems:

phonetic	official	skeletal
mm'akuri	m'akuri	makuri
ui	wi	wi
m'aan	m'an	man
uiia	wia	wia

Only rarely have doubled nasals been converted to single except in the word ngngai.

To summarise, a fourteen-phoneme description of the language has been suggested in the previous sections, and the writing system used here represents each phoneme by a letter, with the following exceptions. The sound /ng/ is represented by ng, and the single phoneme represented by the sounds /'/ and /w/ is also represented by the symbols ' and w, respectively, in order to more closely follow the traditional spelling system. (If we were free to cut loose from the past and suggest an efficient system, we would represent the /'/ and /w/ sounds by the single character w, the /v/ by v, and the /ng/ by g.) The system is surprisingly close to that introduced by Bingham, and we marvel at his depth of linguistic good sense at a time when such good sense was rare. If only he had not encumbered future generations by the apostrophe!

The relation between sounds, phonemes and the symbols of the phonetic system used here are summarised as follows:

sound	phoneme	written symbol
/a/	a	a
/e/	e	e
/i/	i	i
/o/	o	o
/u/	u	u
/m/	m	m
/n/	n	n
/ng/	ng	ng
/b/	b	b
/k/	k	k
/r/	r	r
/t/ }	t	t
/s/ }		
/v/	v	w
/'/ }	w	{ ' w
/w/ }		
/æ/ (occurs in diphthongs)		
/ɔ/ (occurs in diphthongs)		

The foregoing description of orthographies pays no attention, of course, to the matter of word division, although this attracted some of the most heated debate in the meetings of the Vernacular Board. Whether or not words are to be written without separation, linked together, or separated, seems more a matter of convenience or tradition than a basic consideration. According to the VB's recommendation, we have separated phrases such as *i bukiu*, *i rarikin*, *mai nano*, etc., instead of *ibukiu*, *irarikin*, and *mainano*.

There is one matter which apparently no one treats in a standard way, and that is the phonetic insertion of *i* between incompatible words. Because a combination such as *taan mm'akuri* would be actually pronounced as *taanimm'akuri*, it is sometimes written *taani mm'akuri*. Even more troublesome are combinations involving the possessive indicator *n*, such as in *B'anaan Kiribati*, which would be pronounced as *b'anaanikiribati*. Other accepted spellings are *B'anaa ni Kiribati*, or *B'anaani Kiribati*, and possibly even *B'anaa n Kiribati*. These will hopefully eventually be sorted out and a standard orthography recommended, but the reader need not be too concerned with this problem, which does not involve the fundamentals of the language (as long as he pays attention to the pronunciation rules).

3. MORPHEMES

The smallest units of sound that convey meaning are called morphemes, which consist of a small string of phonemes (including the possibility of a single phoneme). Roots and affixes are composed of one or more morphemes. The difference between roots and affixes is that affixes can never stand alone, can be used with various roots, and always stand in the same relationship with their root.

3.1 Forms of the roots

Apparently most all possible permitted combinations of sounds, as outlined in section 2.3, are used to form roots. This contrasts with some of the Malayo-Polynesian languages, which may form roots according to a few restricted patterns. The following examples are grouped according to their phonetic structure, beginning with the simplest.

type N --	<i>n</i>	<i>I</i>
type V --	<i>e</i>	<i>he; she; it</i>
	<i>a</i>	<i>they; four; progressive indicator</i>
	<i>i</i>	<i>I</i>
	<i>oo</i>	<i>wall; enclosure</i>
type CV' --	<i>baa</i>	<i>leaf; thunder</i>
	<i>b'aa</i>	<i>oil; rock</i>
	<i>roo</i>	<i>darkness</i>
	<i>kee</i>	<i>to withdraw</i>
	<i>ka</i>	<i>causative prefix</i>
type NV --	<i>maa</i>	<i>fishtrap</i>
	<i>ngaa</i>	<i>thousand; fathom</i>
	<i>na</i>	<i>future indicator</i>

type VV --	ie	<i>sail</i>
	ao	<i>and; fishline</i>
	uee	<i>flower</i>
type VN --	ang	<i>wind, air</i>
	on	<i>turtle; full</i>
	un	<i>angry</i>
	oon	<i>turtles</i>
type NVV --	nao	<i>wave</i>
	ngae	<i>satisfied</i>
	mooi	<i>drink</i>
type NVN --	nang	<i>cloud; about to</i>
	man	<i>animal; letter</i>
	maan	<i>a long time</i>
	ngan	<i>side sprout</i>
	non	<i>Morinda tree</i>
type NVVN --	m'aung	<i>foul smelling</i>
	meaang	<i>north</i>
type NCV' --	mka	<i>rotten</i>
	ngkaa	<i>give it to me</i>
	mb'a	<i>kiss</i>
type NNV --	(none)	
type VVN --	iaang	<i>northward</i>
type VVV --	aoi	<i>dew</i>
	uea	<i>king</i>
	auee	<i>exclamation</i>
type VNV' --	ano	<i>ball</i>
	um'a	<i>house</i>
	ongo	<i>to hear</i>
type VCV --	oki	<i>to return</i>
	ato	<i>liver</i>
	ura	<i>to burn</i>
type CVV --	rao	<i>friend</i>
	rua	<i>pit, hole</i>
	kua	<i>porpoise, whale</i>
type CV'N --	tang	<i>to cry</i>
	ran	<i>water</i>
	kam	<i>you</i>

and so forth. The following are examples of rather long roots:

nam'akaina	<i>moon</i>
takaakaro	<i>to play</i>
ntakaareau	<i>kind of spider</i>

One might expect that such long examples were formed by a combination of morphemes which have since been lost.

3.2 Affixes

Affixes include prefixes and suffixes, as there are apparently no true infixes in Kiribatese. There are both attached and detached forms (particles), where the difference between them is often a matter of mere orthography rather than of basic structure. The number of Kiribatese affixes is too small to enable one to make general statements concerning their structure.

Many Kiribatese affixes are morphemes which can be inserted in various positions relative to a word. Thus, classification as prefixes or suffixes may indicate only the predominant usage. The following is a list of some of the most common affixes:

prefixes

i	<i>mutually, reciprocally</i>
ka	<i>causative</i>
kau	<i>abundant in</i>
bu	<i>smelling like</i>
boi	<i>smelling like</i>
kii	<i>having the nature of</i>
tan	<i>to turn</i>
uii	<i>to talk</i>
tiri	<i>cruel</i>
nano	<i>having attitude of</i>
kee	<i>to move</i>
boo	<i>in contact; corresponding</i>
taka	<i>very</i>
i	<i>indicates origin (nationality)</i>
bura	<i>having characteristic of</i>

suffixes

ra	<i>bad</i>
buaka	<i>bad</i>
raoi	<i>good</i>
mai	<i>toward speaker</i>
wati	<i>toward you</i>
rake	<i>upward; eastward</i>
rio	<i>downward; westward</i>
uaai	<i>into two parts</i>
nako	<i>away</i>
rikaaki	<i>backward</i>
maae	<i>in different directions, scattered</i>
akina	<i>transitiviser</i>
na	<i>transitiviser</i>
m'aaka	<i>proficient at</i>
mweere	<i>slow</i>
tata	<i>fast</i>
remwe	<i>late</i>

In addition there are the possessive suffixes (section 4.5.4), the transitive verb suffixes (section 4.8.6), and a group of special emphatic suffixes listed below:

tautau	kaei
nonginong	bwerebwere
tongitong	etc.

In presenting the above list the intention is to include those which are used with many different roots and to exclude those used with only one root. We are by no means convinced that this goal has been achieved. A small number of such morphemes occur in the interior of words, and perhaps these should be discussed as infixes.

The prefix *i* — gives the idea of mutuality of reciprocity to the word. It is often associated with a reduplication of part of the word:

tangira	<i>love (n.); to love (v.t.)</i>
itangitangiri	<i>mutual love (n.); to love each other (v.i.)</i>
buoka	<i>help (n.); to help (v.t.)</i>
ibuobuoki	<i>cooperation (n.); to help each other (v.i.)</i>
rao	<i>friend (n.)</i>
iraorao	<i>friendship (n.); to be friends with each other (v.i.)</i>
tara	<i>to look at (v.t.)</i>
itaratara	<i>to mutually look at (v.t.)</i>
a itaratarai	<i>they looked at each other</i>
kam itaratarai	<i>you looked at yourselves</i>
ribaa	<i>hatred (n.); to hate (v.t.)</i>
iriribai	<i>mutual hatred (n.); to hate each other (v.i.)</i>
rib'a	<i>to crowd, be too close (v.i.)</i>
irib'arib'a	<i>to be too close to each other (v.i.)</i>

The prefix *ka* — converts many different types of root words into transitive verbs (see section 4.8.7.1).

The prefix *kau* — converts nouns, sometimes with reduplication, into adjectives (or other nouns) meaning 'abundant in' the given noun:

buki	<i>buttock (n.)</i>
kaubukibuki	<i>having large buttocks (adj.)</i>
mmamma	<i>breast (n.)</i>
kaummamma	<i>having large breasts (adj.)</i>
m'ane	<i>money (n.)</i>
kaum'ane	<i>rich, having lots of money (adj.)</i>
bee	<i>hip (n.)</i>
kaubeebee	<i>having large hips (adj.)</i>
aba	<i>land (n.)</i>
kauaba	<i>having much land (adj.) etc.</i>

The prefix *bu* — converts nouns, sometimes with reduplication, into adjectives (or other nouns) meaning *smelling like*:

ika	<i>fish (n.)</i>
buikaika	<i>fishy smelling (adj.); the smell of fish (n.)</i>
man	<i>animal (n.)</i>
bumaniman	<i>smelling like an animal (usually referring to a strong odor of sweat) (adj.)</i>

ai	<i>fire</i> (n.)
buaiai	<i>smoky smelling</i> (adj.)
ang	<i>air</i> (n.)
buangang	<i>stale smelling</i> (adj.); <i>a stale smell</i> (n.)

The same morpheme occurs in other words, whose derivation is not so obvious:

buaraku	<i>smelling of urine</i> (adj.)
nanabutoko	<i>smelling of bad feminine hygiene</i> (adj.)

The prefix *boi* — performs the same function as *bu*:

ika	<i>fish</i> (n.)
boiika	<i>smelling of fish</i> (adj.)
boiarara	<i>pleasant smelling</i> (adj.)
boiraa	<i>foul smelling</i> (adj.)

There is the word *bingaongao* *smelling of excrement*, which apparently uses a modification of the prefix *bu* or *boi*.

The prefix *kii* — is used with adjectives, etc., often with reduplication, to give the idea of *customarily that way*, and usually in a derogatory sense:

noku	<i>envious of someone's food or possessions</i> (adj.)
kiinokunoku	<i>customarily envious</i> (adj.)
biu	<i>afraid</i> (adj.); <i>to run away to avoid a fight</i> (v.i.)
kiibiubiu	<i>cowardly</i> (adj.)
mim	<i>to urinate</i> (v.i.)
kiimimmim	<i>prone to wetting his pants</i> (adj.)
maaku	<i>to fear</i> (v.i.)
kiimamaaku	<i>customarily afraid</i> (adj.); <i>'fraidy cat'</i> (n.) etc.

The prefix *tan* — may more logically be classed as a root which takes various suffixes. Its meaning is *to turn*:

nako	<i>away</i>
tannako	<i>to turn away</i> (v.i.)
mai	<i>toward me</i>
tanimai	<i>to turn toward me</i> (v.i.)

The prefix *uii* — forms several words having the meaning of various kinds of conversation or talk:

uiirikiriki	<i>to whisper</i> (v.i.)
anti	<i>ghost</i> (n.)
uinnantiia	<i>to gossip about</i> (v.t.)

(This prefix has customarily been spelled *wi*, and whether or not to retain this customary spelling has not yet been decided.)

The prefix *tiri* — gives the meaning of cruelty or the killing of the root part:

aomata	<i>person</i> (n.)
tiriaomata	<i>murder, manslaughter</i> (n.)
man	<i>insect, animal</i> (n.)
tiriman	<i>to kill insects</i> (v.i.)
b'ai n tiriman	<i>insecticide</i> (n.)

bwebwe	<i>fungus</i> (n.)
b'ai n tiribwebwe	<i>fungicide</i> (n.)

The prefix *nano* -- is attached to adjectives, sometimes occurring in modified form, to give the idea of attitude or personality as described by the adjective:

rietaata	<i>high</i> (adj.)
nanorieta	<i>haughty, conceited, arrogant</i> (adj.)
uoua	<i>two</i>
nanououa	<i>doubtful, undecided</i> (adj.)
rinano	<i>low</i> (adj.)
nanorinano	<i>humble</i> (adj.) etc.

The prefix *kee* — forms intransitive verbs which indicate movement in the direction indicated by the rest of the word, which is usually a suffix:

rikaaki	<i>backward</i>
keerikaaki	<i>to move backward</i> (v.i.)
wati	<i>toward you</i>
keewati	<i>to move away from speaker</i> (v.i.)
mai	<i>toward speaker</i>
keemai	<i>to move toward speaker</i> (v.i.) etc.

The prefix *boo* — has a wide range of meanings, including *corresponding to, contact with, even with, a blow*, etc., and is used with various roots in various ways:

buaakaka	<i>bad</i> (adj.)
boobuaka	<i>dear, expensive, disadvantageously priced</i> (adj.)
raoiroi	<i>good</i> (adj.)
booraoi	<i>cheap, inexpensive, advantageously priced</i> (adj.)

In addition, the following words contain the morpheme *boo*:

bootaki	<i>to meet, confer</i> (v.i.)
kabooa	<i>to mix</i> (v.t.)
boota	<i>to bring together</i> (v.t.)

The prefix *taka* — intensifies adjectives:

mainaina	<i>white</i> (adj.)
takamainaina	<i>very white</i> (adj.)

The prefix *i* — means *originating from or having the nationality of*, etc.:

i Amerika	<i>American</i>
i Tuvalu	<i>Tuvaluan</i>
i Tiaina	<i>Chinese</i>
i Aranuuka	<i>a person from Aranuuka</i>

The prefix *bura* — means *having characteristic of, or like, seems to be*, etc.:

baba	<i>crazy</i> (adj.)
burababa	<i>having a crazy nature (somewhat weaker in connotation than the above)</i> (adj.)
rang	<i>worthless, poor, destitute</i> (adj.); <i>such a person</i> (n.)
burarang	<i>badly dressed, ill kept, poor, etc.; gullible, easily deceived, stupid</i> (adj.)

raoiroi	<i>good</i> (adj.)
buraraoiroi	<i>seeming to be good</i> (adj.)
kamoamoa	<i>boasting, bragging, vanity</i> (n.)
burakamoa	<i>conceited, proud of oneself, stuck up</i> (adj.)

The suffix *ra* — forms a small number of adjectives meaning *disagreeable* or *bad*, and often has the form *raa*:

boi	<i>odor, smell</i> (n.)
boiraa	<i>foul smelling</i> (adj.)

In addition, there are words containing the morpheme *ra*:

kam'araa	<i>bad</i> (adj.)
kammairaa	<i>bad looking</i> (adj.)

The suffix *buaka* — forms words meaning *bad*:

tiki	<i>tight, stretched</i> (adj.)
tikibuaka	<i>homely, ugly</i> (adj.)
ang	<i>air, wind</i> (n.)
angibuaka	<i>a strong or bad wind</i> (n.)
taetae	<i>to speak</i> (v.i.); <i>language, speech</i> (n.)
taetaebuaka	<i>to speak badly</i> (v.i.); <i>foul or bad language</i> (n.) etc.

The suffix *raoi* — forms words meaning *good* or *advantageous*:

tiki	<i>tight, stretched</i> (adj.)
tikiraoi	<i>pretty, beautiful</i> (adj.)
buti	<i>to travel, proceed</i> (v.i.)
butiraoi	<i>to travel or proceed freely without difficulty</i> (v.i.)
takaakaro	<i>to play</i> (v.i.)
takaakaroraoi	<i>to play well</i> (v.i.)

The suffixes *mai* and *wati* — form words, mostly verbs, with meaning *toward the speaker* and *toward you*, respectively. Roots either take neither or either of these suffixes:

nako	<i>to go</i> (v.i.)
nakomai	<i>to go toward speaker</i> (v.i.)
nakoati or nakowati	<i>to go toward you</i> (v.i.)
kare	<i>to throw</i> (v.i.)
karemai	<i>to throw toward speaker</i> (v.i.)
karewati	<i>to throw toward you</i> (v.i.)
karea	<i>to throw</i> (v.t.)
karemaia	<i>to throw toward speaker</i> (v.t.)
karewatia	<i>to throw toward you</i> (v.t.)
biri	<i>to run</i> (v.i.)
birimai	<i>to run toward speaker</i> (v.i.)
biriwati	<i>to run toward you</i> (v.i.)
kanakoa	<i>to send</i> (v.t.)
kanakomaia	<i>to send to speaker</i> (v.t.)
kanakowatia or kanakoatia	<i>to send to you</i> (v.t.)

The suffixes *rake* and *rio* — form words, mostly verbs, with roots which can take either of the two suffixes. *rake* means *eastward* or *upward* or *shoreward*, while *rio* means *westward* or, *downward* or *seaward*. These ambiguities cause frequent misunderstanding among Kiribatese speakers, and it is difficult to understand how and why they have persisted for so long. Examples:

wae	foot (n.)
waerake	to go eastward or toward the land (v.i.)
wairio (not waerio)	to go westward or toward the sea (v.i.)
biri	to run (v.i.)
birirake	to run upwards or eastwards (v.i.)
biririo	to run downwards or westwards (v.i.)

The suffix *uai* — forms words, usually verbs, with the meaning of *into two pieces*:

koro	to cut (v.i.)
korouaia	to cut into two (v.t.)
bwenaa	to slice (v.t.)
bwenauaia	to slice into two (v.t.)
biria or biriia	to braid (v.t.)
biriuuaia	to braid into two strands (v.t.)

This procedure is sometimes generalised by the suffixes *tennai* *three*, *aai* *four*, etc., but these are far less commonly used than *uai*. Examples:

korotennaia	to cut into three (v.t.)
bwenaaia	to slice into four parts (v.t.)
biritennaia	to braid into three strands (v.t.)

The suffix *nako* — forms words, usually verbs, with the meaning of *away from speaker*:

biri	to run (v.i.)
birinako	to run away (v.i.)
tewea	to throw (v.t.)
tewenakoa	to throw away (v.t.)
maae	dispersed (adj.)
maeenako	to disperse away (v.i.)
tae	faded (adj.)
taenako	to fade away (v.i.) etc.

The suffix *rikaaki* — forms words, usually verbs, with the meaning of *backwards*:

buti	to travel, proceed (v.i.)
butirikaaki	to travel backward (v.i.)
kee	to move (v.i.)
keerikaaki	to move backward (v.i.) etc.

The suffixes *akina* and *na* — are used in the formation of transitive verbs and are discussed in sections 4.8.7.2 and 4.8.7.4.

The suffix *m'aaka* — is used to form words, usually adjectives, with the meaning of *proficient at*:

buti	to travel, proceed (v.i.)
butim'aaka	fast (adj.)

oota	<i>to shine (v.i.)</i>
ootam'aaka	<i>bright (adj.)</i>
tenaa	<i>to bite (v.t.)</i>
tenam'aaka	<i>capable of biting hard (adj.)</i>
uti	<i>to awaken (v.i.)</i>
utim'aaka	<i>capable of easily awakening (adj.) etc.</i>

The suffix *mweere* — is used to form words, usually adjectives, with the meaning of *slow*:

buti	<i>to travel, proceed (v.i.)</i>
butimweere	<i>slow (adj.)</i>
uti	<i>to awaken (v.i.)</i>
utimweere	<i>slow to awaken (adj.)</i>
kiba	<i>to fly (v.i.)</i>
kibamweere	<i>slow at flying (adj.) etc.</i>

The suffix *tata* — is used to form words, usually adjectives, with the meaning of *fast*:

uii	<i>mouth (n.)</i>
uiitata	<i>fast at talking (adj.)</i>
bai	<i>hand (n.)</i>
baitata	<i>fast at working with the hands (adj.)</i>
wae	<i>foot (n.)</i>
waetata	<i>fast in general (adj.) etc.</i>

The suffix *remwe* — forms words, usually adjectives, with the meaning of *late* or *slow*:

wae	<i>foot (n.)</i>
waeremwe	<i>slow (adj.)</i>
uii	<i>mouth (n.)</i>
uiiremwe	<i>slow at talking (adj.)</i>

In addition there is the word *iremwe* meaning *late (in arriving, etc.)*.

The possessive suffixes — are described in section 4.5.4.

The transitive verb suffixes — are described in section 4.8.6.

The morpheme *maae* — gives the idea of dispersal or of going in different directions:

nako	<i>to go (v.i.)</i>
maeenako	<i>to disperse, disappear in different directions (v.i.)</i>
uamaae	<i>general, wide in application or meaning (adj.)</i>

3.3 Adaptation of foreign words

Under discussion here is the recent acquisition of words from other languages rather than prehistorical evolution. Words are accepted from other languages through direct speaker-listener contact. Foreign written materials have practically no effect as so few Kiribatese read foreign languages. Thus, the foreign words accepted are rendered into Kiribatese according to their

pronunciation. The representation of many different foreign sounds into the 14 or so Kiribatese phonemes often requires considerable changes in the word, so that the original word is often hardly recognisable by a speaker of the source language.

3.3.1 Words derived from English

English provides by far the largest number of foreign source words. The English vowels /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/ and /u/ are so similar to their Kiribatese counterparts that they are accepted directly. The English combinations /ba/ and /ma/ usually become b'a and m'a:

b'aatoro	bottle
m'aabu	mop

The English sound /æ/ usually becomes ae or a:

maatieti (n.), maatiati	matches; match
Tiaeki, Tiaeke	Jack
baatere (n.), baetere	battery
baaki (n.), baeki	bag
kaeran (n.), kaaran	gallon

The English sound /ar/ is usually rendered by aa or by a:

m'aakete (n.)	market
b'aa (n.)	bar
tioka (n.)	sugar

The English sound /I/ usually becomes i:

bititon (n.)	piston
tiin (n.)	tin

The English sound /ɔ/ usually becomes ao:

taoo (n.)	saw
taoro (n.)	salt

The English sound /oo/ usually becomes o:

boki (n.)	book
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The English sound /ə/ usually becomes a:

katitam (n.)	customs (office)
turaaiwa (n.)	driver
Tiaaman (n.)	German
tibana	spanner
b'ati (n.)	bus

The English sound /ɛ/ usually becomes ee or ei:

reerioo (n.)	radio
kureita (n.)	grader (earth-moving machine)

The English consonants /b/, /k/, /m/, /n/, /r/ and /t/ are usually similar enough to the corresponding Kiribatese sounds to be accepted directly.

Examples:

b'ati (n.)	bus
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<u>r</u> okete (n.)	<u>r</u> ocket	
<u>t</u> aibora (n.)	<u>t</u> able	etc.

The English sounds /f/, /v/ and /p/ usually become b:

<u>B</u> uranti	<u>F</u> rance	
<u>a</u> aboro (n.)	<u>a</u> pple	etc.

The English sound /g/ usually becomes k:

<u>k</u> oorā (n.)	<u>g</u> old	
<u>k</u> aeti (n.)	<u>g</u> as	
<u>k</u> ooti (n.)	<u>g</u> oat	
<u>k</u> iriiti (n.)	<u>g</u> rease	

The English sound /l/ usually becomes r. The sound /d/ when followed by /i/ or /I/ also usually becomes r. Examples:

<u>r</u> eerioo (n.)	<u>r</u> adio	
<u>b</u> uraoki (n.)	<u>b</u> lock	
<u>r</u> oka (n.)	<u>l</u> ock	

When /d/ is followed by a vowel other than /i/ or /I/ it usually becomes t:

<u>t</u> ake (n.)	<u>d</u> uck	
<u>t</u> aokita (n.)	<u>d</u> octor	

The English sound /h/ is usually omitted entirely:

<u>a</u> b'akaati (n.)	<u>h</u> alfcaste	
<u>a</u> uti (n.)	<u>h</u> ouse	

The English sounds /j/, /ch/, /s/, /sh/ and /z/ usually become ti:

<u>T</u> iooti	<u>G</u> eorge	
<u>T</u> iabaan	<u>J</u> apan	
<u>T</u> iaina	<u>C</u> hina	
<u>i</u> nti (n.)	<u>i</u> nch	
<u>a</u> oti (n.)	<u>h</u> orse	
<u>t</u> ioka (n.)	<u>s</u> ugar	
<u>t</u> iein (n.)	<u>c</u> hain	
<u>b</u> intiniti (n.)	<u>b</u> usiness	

English consonant clusters are rendered in many different ways, and there is no standard method. For example, the fr combination has been rendered both by bur and by bir as in the following examples:

<u>B</u> uranti	<u>F</u> rance	
<u>b</u> iraoki	<u>f</u> rog	

Many other inconsistencies exist.

English words have stressed or accented syllables and these are frequently interpreted by Kiribatese to be longer than unstressed syllables. Consequently long vowels are commonly used in the stressed syllables:

<u>a</u> ama	<u>h</u> ammer	
<u>t</u> eekitinari	<u>d</u> ictionary	
<u>r</u> ibooti	<u>r</u> eport	

The above rules are not adhered to strongly. The way in which any given English word will be rendered depends on many variables. Such words are brought by people of varied accents (Australian, English, American, Japanese, etc.), and

are heard by people who are not used to hearing such sounds. Most Kiribatese hear such words from other Kiribatese rather than from the original speaker.

Some words are taken without any change of meaning:

taibora	<i>table</i>
bentira	<i>pencil</i>
b'aatika	<i>bicycle</i>
tiein	<i>chain</i>
aaboro	<i>apple</i>

Some words have been given a wider meaning. The first English equivalent indicated in the following list is the source word:

timenti, timanti	<i>cement; concrete; foundation</i>
kaab'a	<i>copper; galvanised iron</i>
kiraati	<i>glass (material); glass for drinking; mirror</i>
kiriiti	<i>grease; oil</i>
boki	<i>book; magazine; pamphlet</i>
kaa	<i>car; cart; truck</i>
beneka	<i>vinegar; chili</i>

This practice seems to create many ambiguities and confusion.

Some words have been taken from brand names to indicate the product and possibly some related things as well.

buraa'im'ati (from Primus)	<i>cooking stove</i>
rutoo (from Ludo)	<i>game of snakes and ladders</i>

3.3.2 Words derived from Greek

A very small number of words, mostly religious terms and place names, were derived from the Greek. This adaptation was done chiefly by non-native speakers (especially Bingham) and so may not shed much light on how such adaptation takes place naturally. However, the pronunciation pattern reflected in use of lengthened vowels is a product of the native speakers' inclinations, and not imposed by outsiders. In any case, the following words are now firmly part of the Kiribatese language:

ebikebo, ebikobo	<i>Bishop</i>
ekaareetia	<i>church; congregation</i>
erene	<i>Greece; Greek</i>
miterio	<i>mystery</i>
euangkerio	<i>gospel</i>
tutia	<i>mass</i>
eukari	<i>body of Christ; thanksgiving</i>

The above are derived from the following Greek words:

ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ	<i>overseer</i>
ΕΧΑΛΕΣΙΑ	<i>gather</i>
ΗΕΛΛΕΝ	<i>Greece</i>
ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΣ	<i>mystery</i>
ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΣ	<i>good message</i>
ΘΥΤΙΟΝ	<i>victim</i>
ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣ	<i>good grace</i>

(Note that euangkerio is customarily spelled evangkerio.)

3.3.3 Words derived from Fijian

A very small number of words were introduced, mainly by leprosy patients sent from the Gilbert Islands to the leper colony at Makoqai in the 1930s and 1940s. Most of these words do not seem to have achieved widespread acceptance. The following two examples,

b'akarau	<i>dress, pattern</i>
m'aatai	<i>clever</i>

were derived from the Fijian words

vakarau	<i>ready, prepared</i>
matai	<i>clever, skilled</i>

3.3.4 Words derived from Tuvaluan and Samoan

Kiribatese obviously has many words which entered during prehistoric times, but very few from recent times, such as the following example:

baroum	<i>kitchen</i>
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which was derived from the Tuvaluan

fale umu	<i>bakehouse</i>
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4. FUNCTION CLASSES (PARTS OF SPEECH)

In this section words are considered according to their function as nouns, verbs, etc. These labels are useful for categorising words in English, less useful for Kiribatese, but we continue to use them for convenience.

4.1 Articles

The Kiribatese words *te singular*, and *taian plural* have functions similar to articles in other languages. They indicate number (singular and plural) but not definiteness or indefiniteness, and so are not completely analogous to *a* and *the*.

4.1.1 *te*

This word always precedes a noun, and stands separate from its noun in the writing system recommended by the KLB and in most all existing text. The meaning is either *a*, *the*, *an*, or sometimes it has no counterpart in English at all other than to indicate singular. Examples:

te boki	<i>book; a book; the book</i>
te atiibu	<i>stone; a stone; the stone</i>
te nang	<i>cloud; a cloud; the cloud</i>
te maraki	<i>pain; a pain; the pain</i>
te rua	<i>pit; a pit; the pit</i>
te mata	<i>eye; an eye; the eye</i>
te tama	<i>father; a father; the father</i>

If it stands before a collective noun, or name of a substance, etc., it can mean *some*. Examples:

te ran	<i>water; some water; the water</i>
te taari	<i>salt; some salt; the salt</i>
te takataka	<i>copra; some copra; the copra</i>
te tano	<i>sand; some sand; the sand</i>
te kunnikai	<i>cloth; some cloth; the cloth</i>
te ang	<i>wind; some wind; the wind</i>
te raraa	<i>blood; some blood; the blood</i>

Because such constructions can be translated in different ways in English, future examples will give one form only, with the understanding that other translations are possible in accordance with the above examples.

A very small number of nouns customarily never take the prefix or article *te*. They mostly mean something of which only one is considered to exist:

taai	<i>the sun</i>
nam'akaina	<i>the moon</i>
karawa	<i>sky; heaven</i>
aonnaaba	<i>the earth</i>
taari	<i>the sea</i>
marawa	<i>the sea</i>

(but note the exception, *Te Atua God*). When used with words which customarily function as adjectives or intransitive verbs, the effect is to nominalise them:

uraura	<i>red</i>
te uraura	<i>redness</i>
nanokaawaki	<i>to be sorry; sad</i>
te nanokaawaki	<i>sorrow</i>
m'ananga	<i>to travel</i>
te m'ananga	<i>journey</i>

(see section 4.4.6 for details regarding this nominalisation process).

The article *te* is also used, somewhat informally, to indicate a class of objects. Thus, *te ika* can mean *fish* (as a class), *some fish*, as well as *a fish* or *the fish*. Examples:

e bati te ika	<i>there are lots of fish</i>
e roko te maninnara	<i>mosquitoes came.</i>

4.1.2 taian

This word has roughly the same function and use as *te*, above, except that it indicates the plural of nouns. Thus, *taian* is used only with nouns indicating countable objects, or which can have plurals. It is not used with collective nouns or with substance names, nor to nominalise other words or expressions. With bimorphous nouns (having a distinct plural form see section 4.4.1) the singular form is used with *taian*. When used before nouns beginning with an incompatible consonant or nasal (see section 2.3) it becomes *taiani*:

taiani boki	<i>some books; books; the books</i>
taian atiibu	<i>some stones; stones; the stones</i>
taian nang	<i>some clouds; clouds; the clouds</i>

taiani maraki	<i>some pains; pains; the pains</i>
taian rua	<i>some pits; pits; the pits</i>
taiani mata	<i>some eyes; eyes; the eyes</i>
taian tama	<i>some fathers; fathers; the fathers</i>

When the noun is obviously plural from other features of its environment, apparently the taian may be used or omitted without any difference of meaning:

naang akekei	<i>those clouds</i>
taian nang akekei	<i>those clouds</i>
booki akanne	<i>those books</i>
taiani boki akanne	<i>those books</i>
uuto aikai	<i>these young coconut trees</i>
taian uto aikai	<i>these young coconut trees</i>

It is always to be kept in mind that many of the examples used are subject to pronunciation changes as described in section 2.4. The last example, for instance, can also be pronounced taian uuto aikai which may confuse one to believe that the plural form of uto is being used.

4.2 Noun classifiers and numerals

The ordinary counting numbers are as follows:

teuana	<i>one</i>	uabui	<i>twenty</i>
uoua	<i>two</i>	uabui ma teuana	<i>twenty one</i>
teniuia	<i>three</i>	uabui ma uoua	<i>twenty two etc.</i>
aua	<i>four</i>	tenibui	<i>thirty</i>
nimaaua	<i>five</i>	tenibui ma teuana	<i>thirty one</i>
onoua	<i>six</i>	tenibui ma uoua	<i>thirty two etc.</i>
itiua	<i>seven</i>	abui	<i>forty</i>
waniua	<i>eight</i>	nimabui	<i>fifty</i>
ruaiua	<i>nine</i>	onobui	<i>sixty</i>
tebuina	<i>ten</i>	itibui	<i>seventy</i>
tebui ma teuana	<i>eleven</i>	wanibui	<i>eighty</i>
tebui ma uoua	<i>twelve</i>	ruabui	<i>ninety</i>
tebui ma tenuia	<i>thirteen etc.</i>	tebubua	<i>one hundred</i>

The morpheme bui meaning *ten* has customarily been written as bwi in all cases. There is still controversy on how it should be spelled. Note that tenuia and waniua, while pronounced (in Southern Dialect) as indicated above, are customarily written tenna and wana. This seems to be related to the fact that the addition of the suffix -ua to the root in each case requires the extra sounds because of the terminal nasal of the root (see section 2.4).

The word ma *and; with* is used to form numbers from eleven through ninety nine, but not used after words for 'hundred' or larger.

tebubua	<i>hundred</i>
tengaa	<i>thousand</i>
terebu	<i>ten thousand</i>
tekuri	<i>hundred thousand</i>
teea	<i>million</i>
tetano	<i>ten million</i>
tetoki	<i>hundred million</i>

In recent times mirion *million* as derived from English is replacing *teea*, and the words *terebu* and higher numbers are not frequently used because they are being replaced by other combinations (see below).

Different numbers are used for counting different things. The numbers presented in the previous paragraphs are those used for counting general objects. There is only one element of the numbers which changes according to the nature of the things counted, and this is the *classifier*. To the classifier are added the following affixes to indicate the number:

te- -na	<i>one</i>
ua- or uo-	<i>two</i>
ten-	<i>three</i>
a-	<i>four</i>
nima-	<i>five</i>
ono- or one-	<i>six</i>
iti-	<i>seven</i>
wan	<i>eight</i>
rua-	<i>nine</i>

The most common classifiers being used are as follows:

ua	<i>fruit</i> ; classifier for general objects
man	<i>animal</i> ; classifier for persons and animals
kai	<i>tree</i> ; <i>stick</i> ; classifier for plants
baa	<i>leaf</i> ; classifier for sheets or flat objects
ai	classifier for sticks or long objects
kuo	classifier for liquid measure
waa	<i>canoe</i> ; classifier for boats, ships, airplanes, canoes, etc.
kora	<i>sinnet</i> ; classifier for baskets
ung	classifier for pandanus fruit
ngaa	<i>fathom</i> ; <i>thousand</i>
m'aang	special classifier for humans only (see below)
roro	<i>generation</i>
m'angko	<i>cup</i> ; classifier for cupfuls
bong	<i>day</i>
ato	classifier for coconut thatch
inaki	classifier for rows of thatch
ritoro	classifier for bundles of thatch
abuta	classifier for handfuls
rinan	<i>row</i>

The prefix *ua- two* is combined irregularly with *-ua* and *-man* to produce *uoua* and *uoman*. *Ono-* becomes *one-* when combined with *-ai* to produce *oneai*. *Rua-* plus *-ua* produces *ruaiua nine*.

The numbers representing integral powers of ten are used in same way as classifiers:

bui	<i>ten</i> ; used only in numbers in which the classifier <i>ua</i> is appropriate
ngaun	<i>ten</i> ; used in numbers in which the classifier <i>ua</i> is not appropriate
bubua	<i>hundred</i> etc.

The suffix *-na* for *one* is used with the classifiers which specify the nature of the objects counted, and with *bui*, but not with the others:

temanna	<i>one (animal)</i>
teuana	<i>one (general)</i>
tekaina	<i>one (plant)</i>
tebaana	<i>one (sheet)</i>
teaina	<i>one (stick)</i>
tekuona	<i>one (cup, glass, etc.)</i>

but

tebubua	<i>one hundred</i>
tengaa	<i>one thousand etc.</i>

and

tebuina	<i>ten (general)</i>
tengaun	<i>ten (for any other specific class of thing)</i>

The root *ira-* is used to form interrogatives:

iraua?	<i>how many (general)?</i>
irakai?	<i>how many (plants)?</i>
iraman?	<i>how many (people)?</i>

The root *tabe-* is used to form words denoting an unspecified quantity:

tabeua	<i>several (general)</i>
tabebaa	<i>several (leaves)</i>
tabeai	<i>several (bottles)</i>

Its reduplicated form is used to give the idea of *each* or *every*:

taani moti n tatabeman	<i>each judge</i>
auti n tatabeua nako	<i>every house</i>
ataei n tatabemaniia	<i>each child</i>

The suffix *-m'aang* is used only in certain special constructions:

tabem'aang	<i>some (people)</i>
tem'aangina	<i>the others (people)</i>

The idea of *other*, when indefinite, is achieved by putting a numeral after the noun:

te boki teuana	<i>another book</i>
aiine tabeman	<i>other women</i>
ta bakoa teaina	<i>another shark</i>

When more definiteness is called for the relative pronouns (usually third person) are used:

te ataei are temanna	<i>the other child</i>
iika ake tabeman	<i>the other fishes</i>
te nii are tekaina	<i>the other coconut tree</i>

There is a peculiar counting system in children's chants and games:

teeu	<i>one</i>	oonou	<i>six</i>
uouu	<i>two</i>	iitiu	<i>seven</i>
teeniu	<i>three</i>	waaniu	<i>eight</i>
aaui	<i>four</i>	ruuai	<i>nine</i>
niimau	<i>five</i>	teebui	<i>ten</i>

This kind of counting apparently stops at 'ten'. The suffix -u used erratically in the above may be the remnant of an ancient classifier. The distinctive pattern of lengthened vowels is unexplained. Also in children's chants and games there occurs a distinctive counting by twos:

teratera	<i>two</i>
uaua	<i>four</i>
tenten	<i>six</i>
nangananga	<i>eight</i>
nimanim	<i>ten</i>

also not used above 'ten'.

4.2.1 Cardinal numbers

The following examples show the formation of the larger cardinal numbers for general objects:

1 354	tengaa tenibubua nimabui ma aua
5 903	nimangaa ruabubua teniua
35 812	tenrebu nimangaa wanibubua tebui ma uoua
652 748	onokuri nimarebu uangaa itibubua abui ma waniua
9 108 352	ruaea tekuri waningaa tenibubua nimabui ma uoua etc.

In recent times the last three would more likely be rendered as follows:

35 812	tenibui ma nimaua te ngaa wanibubua tebui ma uoua
652 748	onobubua nimabui ma uoua te ngaa itibubua abui ma waniua
9 108 352	ruaiua te mirion tebubua waniua te ngaa tenibubua nimabui ma uoua

In dropping the traditional Kiribatese words for ten to the fourth and higher powers, ngaa *thousand* is also becoming used independently, instead of as an attached quantifier, as in the above examples. The same numbers, for counting sheets of paper, for example, would become:

1 354	tengaa tenibubua nimangaun ma abaa
5 903	nimangaa ruabubua tenibaa
35 812	tenrebu nimangaa wanibubua tengaun ma uabaa
652 748	onokuri nimarebu uangaa itibubua angaun ma wanibaa
9 108 352	ruaea tekuri waningaa tenibubua nimangaun ma uabaa

For expressing numbers of things the cardinal number is usually placed before the plural form of the noun:

tengaun ma uoman ataei	<i>12 children</i>
tenibubua uangau ma nimabaa beeba	<i>325 sheets of paper</i>
ruangaun ma nimakuo m'angko n ran	<i>95 glasses of water</i>
uangaun ma itikai nii aika a ririeta	<i>27 tall coconut trees</i>
tengaun ma teniman au beeki	<i>my 13 pigs; 13 of my pigs; I have 13 pigs.</i>
uoman amii taan reirei	<i>your two teachers; two of your teachers; you have two teachers.</i>

But the singular form of the noun is also often used:

tengaun ma uoman te ataei	<i>12 children</i>
teniua te boki	<i>three books</i>
tennai te bentira	<i>three pencils</i>
tenikai te nii	<i>three coconut trees etc.</i>

4.2.2 Ordinal numbers

These are formed by prefixing *ka-* to the cardinal numbers, except for *the first*. The ordinal is linked with the noun by *n*:

te kauoman n tia reirei	<i>the second teacher</i>
te kairaua ni kawai?	<i>which street? (expecting the reply will be an ordinal number)</i>
te kateniua ni boki	<i>the third book</i>
te karuaman	<i>the ninth (person)</i>
te moa ni kaibuke	<i>the first ship</i>
te katebubuanimakai	<i>the 105th (tree)</i>

When placed after the noun the ordinal is linked using a relative pronoun:

te auti ae te kaaua	<i>the fourth house</i>
te mai are te katenikai	<i>the third breadfruit tree</i>
te b'aene are te kanimakora	<i>the fifth basket</i>
te baa ni mao ae te kauabaa	<i>the second saltbush leaf</i>

The ordinals can be used verbally as transitive verbs, but are defective in that only third person objects are permitted. The verb does not take the inflectional endings described in section 4.8.6:

I kateniua rokou	<i>I came three times (lit. my coming happened three times)</i>
Kam kauoua matuumii n te ngaina aei?	<i>did you sleep twice earlier today? (lit. did your sleep happen twice earlier today?)</i>

Distributive numerals are formed by reduplicating the prefix *ka-*:

a na anganaki kakanimaua te taaraa	<i>they'll be given five dollars each</i>
a maekanaki auti akekei ni kakauoua te utuu	<i>those houses are each occupied by two families.</i>
a na nako ni kakateniman i aoni waaia	<i>three (persons) each will go on their canoes.</i>

Fractions, except *iter* *half* are expressed by the affixes *ka-* *-m'akoro*

uoua te katenim'akoro	<i>two thirds</i>
iteran te m'ane	<i>half of the money</i>
itiua te katebubuanim'akoro	<i>seven hundredths</i>
nimaua te katebui ma onoua ni m'akoro	<i>five sixteenths</i>
teniua te kanimam'akoro n am ben	<i>three fifths of your coconuts</i>

4.3 Agent prefixes

These are used before a verb to indicate its agent, which is customarily a person. Thus, they are not as productive or flexible as the English suffix '-er' (which can designate inanimate agents such as 'can opener', 'bull dozer', etc.). There has been a recent tendency to extend their use to include non-personal agents. For example, the following constructions have been proposed (but not generally accepted):

kotokoto (v.i.)	<i>to point, indicate</i>
tia koto	<i>preposition (in grammar)</i>
rimoan	<i>to precede (something)</i>
ara	<i>name; noun</i>
tia rimoan ara	<i>article (in grammar)</i>

Such constructions are more readily accepted by educated Kiribatese. They nominalise verbs or verbal expressions. Thus, the singular form (with *tia*) must always be preceded by *te* or a possessive pronoun.

4.3.1 *tia*

The following examples illustrate use with intransitive verbs:

te tia anene	<i>a singer</i>
te tia nakonako	<i>a walker</i>
te tia kakam'arua	<i>a crook</i>
te tia nanokaawaki	<i>a sad person</i>
te tia aakoi	<i>a kind person</i>

In Kiribatese, adjectives are functionally identical with intransitive verbs. However, *tia* can apparently be used freely with the more 'verblike' words, and only with a limited set of the more 'adjective-like' words. There are apparently no counterparts with such words as *uraura red*, *ab'aab'aki big*, *m'aitorio cold*, etc. The word *tia* can be used with transitive verbs, but usually only when the object is indicated. When the object is not indicated the constructions are colloquial and perhaps not correct. Examples:

te tia tiringnga	<i>the person who killed him, his killer</i>
te tia karaoia	<i>the person who made it, its maker</i>
te tia karaoia	<i>the person who made them, their maker</i>
te tia karaoa te auti	<i>the person who made the house</i>
te tia kabuta te kaa	<i>the driver of the car</i>

The word *tia* can also be used with compound verbs, such as in the following constructions:

te tia kan am'arake	<i>a person wanting to eat</i>
te tia kani maeka i Tarawa	<i>a person wanting to live on Tarawa</i>
te tia aki roko	<i>a person not coming (an absent person)</i>

But use with other auxiliary verbs, such as *tuai*, *tia* (the indicator of the perfect tense), etc., is rare.

4.3.2 taan

The word *taan* has the same function as *tia* except that it indicates the plural. Thus, it is not preceded by *te*. When *taan* is followed by a word beginning with an incompatible sound, as described in section 2.3, it becomes *taani*.

Examples:

<i>taan anene</i>	<i>singers</i>
<i>taan nakonako</i>	<i>walkers</i>
<i>taani kakam'arua</i>	<i>crooks</i>
<i>taan nanokaawaki</i>	<i>sad persons</i>
<i>taan aakoi</i>	<i>kind persons</i>

and

<i>taan tiringnga</i>	<i>his killers</i>
<i>taani karaoia</i>	<i>its makers</i>
<i>taani karaoia</i>	<i>their makers</i>
<i>taani karaoa te auti</i>	<i>the house's makers</i>
<i>taani kan am'arake</i>	<i>persons wanting to eat</i>
<i>taani kani maeka i Tarawa</i>	<i>persons wanting to live on Tarawa</i>
<i>taan aki am'arake</i>	<i>persons not eating</i>

The combination *taan tia* can be substituted for *taan* in all such constructions without change of meaning. But this is a recent construction which is considered incorrect by some speakers.

4.4 Nouns

No particular form typifies nouns. Apparently, any permitted combination of sounds can serve as a noun. In Kiribatese, the same word can have many functions. If the noun is singular, its function is usually indicated by presence of the article *te*. There are a small number of singular nouns which do not take a prefix:

- (1) place names, such as

Amerika
Kiribati
Tarawa

- (2) names of persons

- (3) intimate parts of things which are used in the formation of prepositions (see section 4.6), such as

<i>aa</i>	<i>the space under</i>
<i>ao</i>	<i>the top part</i>
<i>nano</i>	<i>the inside</i>
<i>rariki</i>	<i>the side</i>
<i>eta</i>	<i>the space above</i>

- (4) names of the cardinal directions

<i>meaang</i>	<i>north</i>
<i>mainiku</i>	<i>east</i>
<i>maiaki</i>	<i>south</i>
<i>maeao</i>	<i>west</i>

- (5) some nouns which indicate things of which only one is considered to exist:

taai	<i>sun</i>
nam'akaina	<i>moon</i>
marawa	<i>ocean etc.</i>

When nouns are possessed, as when accompanied by possessive pronouns or suffixes, their number is ambiguous because the singular form of bimorphous nouns (section 4.4.1) is always used:

ana kao	<i>his ox; his oxen</i>
au ben	<i>my coconut; my coconuts</i>
matam	<i>your eye; your eyes</i>
aia kirii	<i>their dog; their dogs</i>
rarikin te kaibuke	<i>the side of the ship; the sides of the ship</i>
bukin te kangaanga	<i>the reason for the difficulty; the reasons for the difficulty</i>

4.4.1 Bimorphous nouns

Most nouns have an invariable form and are used for both the singular and the plural. We shall call such nouns 'monomorphous'. Some nouns have different forms for the singular and the plural, and are called 'bimorphous' herein. The plural form of bimorphous nouns is always characterised by the presence of a long vowel, where the corresponding short vowel occurs in the singular form. This lengthened vowel is usually the first vowel occurring in the word.

Examples:

tina	<i>mother</i>
tiina	<i>mothers</i>
kao	<i>ox</i>
kaao	<i>oxen</i>
ben	<i>coconut</i>
been	<i>coconuts</i>
mata	<i>eye</i>
maata	<i>eyes</i>

Strange as it may seem, the bimorphous nature of these nouns never is an essential indicator of the number of a noun. In all cases where a separate plural form is used, there are other indications of plurality in the utterance. Conversely, where there are no other indications of plurality, the distinct plural form of bimorphous nouns is not used. The origin of such a system may thus present an enigma. In any case, number does not seem to be considered very important in Kiribatese. There are so many bimorphous nouns that it would be impractical to present an exhaustive list.

When bimorphous plural nouns are modified by *taian*, or by any possessive pronoun or suffix, the singular form is used:

tari	<i>brother; sister</i>
taari	<i>brothers; sisters</i>
tariu	<i>my brother; my brothers etc.</i>
taian tari	<i>brothers, etc.</i>

uto	<i>young coconut tree</i>
uuto	<i>young coconut trees</i>
taian uto	<i>young coconut trees</i>
aia uto	<i>their young coconut tree;</i> <i>their young coconut trees etc.</i>

(beware of pronunciation of taian uto according to section 2.4.)

Whether or not a given noun is monomorphous or bimorphous apparently depends on its length and complexity, with the shorter, simpler nouns being bimorphous. New acquisitions into the language readily fall into this pattern, as attested by the large number of bimorphous loan words:

boki	<i>book</i>
booki	<i>books</i>
take	<i>duck</i>
taake	<i>ducks</i>
roka	<i>lock</i>
rooka	<i>locks</i>
reta	<i>letter</i>
reeta	<i>letters</i>
kao	<i>ox</i>
kaao	<i>oxen etc.</i>

Let D (for diphthong) stand for any string of vowels of the class V', not including a long sound, and X stand for the combined class of C and N sounds (consonants and nasals). Most bimorphous nouns seem to have the structure VXV, DN, XD, XVX, or XVXV, with most others being monomorphous. Examples of the type VXV:

ika	<i>fish</i>
iika	<i>fishes</i>
uki	<i>fingernail</i>
uuki	<i>fingernails</i>
um'a	<i>house</i>
uum'a	<i>houses</i>
aro	<i>way, manner; religion</i>
aaro	<i>ways, manners; religions</i>
ira	<i>hair</i>
iira	<i>hairs</i>
ino	<i>maggot</i>
iino	<i>maggots</i>
ina	<i>scale (of a fish)</i>
iina	<i>scales etc.</i>

The following are examples of the type XD:

kao	<i>ox</i>
kaao	<i>oxen</i>
kai	<i>tree; stick</i>
kaai	<i>trees; sticks</i>

bai	<i>hand</i>
baai	<i>hands</i>
b'ai	<i>thing</i>
b'aa	<i>things</i>
wae	<i>foot</i>
waae	<i>feet</i>
kie	<i>mat</i>
kiie	<i>mats</i>
moa	<i>chicken</i>
mooa	<i>chickens</i>
mao	<i>saltbush tree</i>
maao	<i>saltbush trees</i>
ria	<i>lip</i>
riia	<i>lips etc.</i>

The following are examples of the type DN:

on	<i>turtle</i>
oon	<i>turtles</i>
ang	<i>wind; air</i>
aang	<i>winds etc.</i>

The following are examples of the type XDN:

ben	<i>coconut</i>
been	<i>coconuts</i>
kun	<i>skin</i>
kuun	<i>skins</i>
man	<i>letter; animal</i>
maan	<i>letters; animals</i>
bong	<i>day</i>
boong	<i>days</i>
nang	<i>cloud</i>
naang	<i>clouds etc.</i>

An exception is *raian lion*, which is monomorphous. The following are examples of the type XVXV:

mata	<i>eye</i>
maata	<i>eyes</i>
tina	<i>mother</i>
tiina	<i>mothers</i>
tama	<i>father</i>
taama	<i>fathers</i>
tati	<i>scissors (singular)</i>
taati	<i>scissors (plural)</i>
biti	<i>knife</i>
biiti	<i>knives</i>

reta	<i>letter</i>
reeta	<i>letters</i>
kewe	<i>lie</i>
keewe	<i>lies etc.</i>

The following monomorphous nouns represent classes of more complex structure than the above:

b'airi	<i>nose; noses</i>
maunga	<i>mountain; mountains</i>
taara	<i>towel; towels</i>
kaboa	<i>boil; boils</i>
burae	<i>hair; hairs</i>
kimoa	<i>rat; rats</i>
kawai	<i>road; roads</i>
roroa	<i>neck; necks</i>
itoi	<i>star; stars</i>
ataei	<i>child; children</i>
auti	<i>house; houses</i>
aoti	<i>horse; horses</i>
aono	<i>land; lands</i>

All words containing any long sound appear to be monomorphous even though their structures may be simple:

booti	<i>boat; boats</i>
ruura	<i>ruler; rulers</i>
neera	<i>nail; nails</i>
kiika	<i>octopus; octopi</i>
nuuka	<i>middle; middles</i>
taara	<i>towel; towels</i>
kaa	<i>car; cars</i>
biia	<i>beer; beers</i>
buua	<i>throat; throats</i>
mmamma	<i>breast; breasts</i>
kirii	<i>dog; dogs</i>
katii	<i>gun; guns</i>
taoo	<i>saw; saws</i>
baa	<i>leaf; leaves</i>
biin	<i>bean; beans</i>
been	<i>pen; pens</i>
buun	<i>spoon; spoons</i>
kiing	<i>key; keys</i>
atuu	<i>head; heads</i>
akuu	<i>back; backs</i>
ooti	<i>hose; hoses</i>
uee	<i>flower; flowers</i>
uaa	<i>fruit; fruits</i>
uui	<i>tooth; teeth</i>
aaui	<i>coconut crab; coconut crabs</i>
oo	<i>enclosure; enclosures</i>
uu	<i>eel trap; eel traps</i>

Many of such words are of recent foreign origin.

Words consisting purely of vowels are bimorphous if they consist of two or less vowels, monomorphous otherwise. Some bimorphous examples:

ie	<i>sail</i>
iie	<i>sails</i>
ao	<i>fishline</i>
aao	<i>fishlines</i>
ia	<i>grey hair</i>
iia	<i>grey hairs</i>
io	<i>noddy</i>
iio	<i>noddies</i>

The following are some monomorphous examples:

uea	<i>king; kings</i>
aia	<i>firewood</i>
aia	<i>enemy; enemies</i>
aoa	<i>hour; hours</i>

The word *aine woman* is bimorphous (*aine women*) in contradiction to the above rules, and appears to be the bimorphous noun of highest complexity in existence.

4.4.2 Juxtaposition of nouns

Gender of singular nouns is indicated by direct juxtaposition with *mm'aane male* or *aine female*:

te moa mm'aane	<i>male chicken, rooster</i>
te kimoa aine	<i>female rat</i>
te kirii aine	<i>female dog, bitch</i>
te kao mm'aane	<i>male ox, bull</i>
te kao aine	<i>female ox, cow</i>
te mwemwera aine	<i>female papaya tree etc.</i>

The second element is apparently a true noun because it can stand alone as a noun, and because modification of nouns by adjectives usually follows a completely different pattern (see section 4.7). Note that in the above singular examples both nouns are in their singular form. In the plural case both nouns take their plural form (here *aine* is bimorphous, *mm'aane* is monomorphous):

moa mm'aane	<i>roosters</i>
kimoa aine	<i>female rats</i>
kirii aine	<i>bitches</i>
kaao mm'aane	<i>bulls</i>
kaao aine	<i>cows</i>
mwemwera aine	<i>female papaya trees</i>

When these plural constructions are used with *taian* the first noun is used in the singular form, the second in the plural:

taiani moa mm'aane	<i>roosters</i>
taiani kimoa aine	<i>female rats</i>
taiani kirii aine	<i>bitches</i>
taiani kao mm'aane	<i>bulls</i>
taiani kao aine	<i>cows etc.</i>

(Note that Kiribatese refer to the gender of plants which produce flowers as *aine* and to the gender which produces fruit as *mm'aane*. One could say that *aine* means *male* and *mm'aane* means *female* in these cases, but a more reasonable interpretation may simply be botanical ignorance.)

Juxtaposition of nouns is used for indicating the material of which an object consists. For the singular case *te* is always used before the substance name:

m'angko te kiraati	<i>glass (drinking) glass</i>
riri te baanni	<i>coconut leaf skirt</i>
taaea te rab'a	<i>rubber tyre</i>
m'am'a te koora	<i>gold ring</i>

The same construction can be used to indicate type or species:

kai te ren	<i>Messerschmidia tree</i>
aoraki te miitira	<i>measles (the measles sickness)</i>
kai te kaina	<i>pandanus tree</i>
man te eitei	<i>frigate bird</i>
taura te iti	<i>electric lamp</i>

When possession is to be indicated by a possessive suffix (see section 4.5.4) the first noun is suffixed without further modification:

ririu te baanni	<i>my coconut leaf skirt</i>
nimau te ran	<i>my drink of water</i>
karara te ika	<i>our meal of fish</i>
aorakim te reebera	<i>your leprosy</i>

The plural cases of these constructions is formed by putting both nouns in the plural and omitting the intervening *te*:

m'angko kiraati	<i>glass (drinking) glasses</i>
riiri baanni	<i>coconut leaf skirts</i>
taaea raab'a	<i>rubber tyres</i>
m'aam'a koora	<i>gold rings</i>
kaai reen	<i>Messerschmidia trees</i>
kaai kaina	<i>pandanus trees</i>
maan eitei	<i>frigate birds</i>
taura iiti	<i>electric lamps</i>
ririu baanni	<i>my coconut leaf skirts</i>
karara iika	<i>our meals of fish</i>

but

nimau te ran	<i>my drinks of water</i>
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(In the last case one might think that *te* is retained because *ran* is a substance name, but note also the case *taaia raab'a!*)

Other cases of such juxtaposition are so rare as to lead one to suspect that it generally does not occur, and the observed cases are really just words formed by combination of morphemes, with which Kiribatese abounds anyway. Examples:

te b'aitari	<i>jellyfish</i>
te bukimanga	<i>forked tail</i>
te newemanga	<i>forked tongue</i>

Such combinations are now written as one word. The plurals appear to have unpredictable structure:

b'aitari (not b'aaitari)	<i>jellyfishes</i>
buukimanga	<i>forked tails</i>
neewemanga	<i>forked tongues</i>

4.4.3 The possessive indicator 'n'

By far the commonest way of indicating the relation of one noun to another is by means of the possessive indicator *n*. When the last sound of the previous noun is incompatible with *n* an *i* is added to the former. When the *n* is incompatible with the beginning sound of the second noun, *n* becomes *ni*. There is considerable variation in writing this type of construction. For example, *aine ni kirabu* is sometimes written *aineni kirabu*, etc. Examples:

baban takataka	<i>copra board</i>
kaauntiran abam'akoro	<i>island council</i>
ruanimate	<i>grave (pit of the dead)</i>
natinieua	<i>prince (not king's son)</i>
iran atuu	<i>hair of the head</i>
buraenimoa	<i>chicken feather</i>
tabo ni mm'akuri	<i>place of work</i>
m'anen Aotiteria	<i>Australian money</i>
kaibuken Tiabaan	<i>Japanese ship</i>
maraki ni biroto	<i>pain in the abdomen</i>
toobu ni uaati	<i>washing soap</i>
waan taromauri	<i>mission ship</i>
raanti ni meeri	<i>mail launch</i>
tangin ataei	<i>cry of a child</i>
aineni kirabu	<i>queen of clubs</i>
bongi ni kukurei	<i>day of happiness</i>
nuukanibong	<i>midnight (middle of the night)</i>
baa n ni (or baanni)	<i>coconut frond</i>
um'anikuuka	<i>cooking house</i>
bokin anene	<i>songbook</i>
itera n aoa	<i>half an hour</i>
ainenium'a	<i>housewife</i>
aro ni Kaatorika	<i>Catholic religion</i>
kaain Amerika	<i>American (person)</i>
otintaai	<i>sunrise</i>

The above singular constructions are pluralised by simply pluralising the first component:

baaban takataka	<i>coconut boards</i>
kaauntiran abam'akoro	<i>island councils</i>
ruanimate	<i>graves</i>
naatinieua	<i>princes etc.</i>

The use of *n* in the above expressions does not strictly speaking indicate possession. For possessive constructions the singular case is indicated in a different way.

In this matter as well as in the case of possessive suffixes and transitive verb suffixes, nouns are considered as belonging to one of two classes, which we shall call *animate* and *inanimate*, where the second class includes anything which is not an animal. Persons (i.e., humans) belong to the animate class.

Non-human animals are usually considered as animate, but on occasions may be treated as inanimate. These matters are discussed further in sections 4.5.4 and 4.8.6.4.

If the possessor is inanimate and singular the pattern is

(noun) + (n) + (te or possessive pronoun) + (noun)

as in the following examples:

taubukin te auti	<i>roof of the house</i>
kaain te ekareetia	<i>member of the congregation</i>
taberan te ni	<i>top of the coconut tree</i>
m'anen te kirabu	<i>the club's money</i>
kaibuken te kamb'ana	<i>the company's ship</i>
raantin te tautaeka	<i>the government's launch</i>
tangin te kitaa	<i>sound of a guitar</i>
nuukan te karaanga	<i>middle of the river</i>
bongin te nam'akaina	<i>day of the month</i>
baan te ni	<i>leaf of the coconut tree</i>
bokin te reirei	<i>the school's book</i>
iteran te m'ane	<i>half of the money</i>
ootan te taura	<i>light of the lamp</i>

If the possessor is inanimate but plural the pattern is

(noun) + (n) + (plural noun)

as in the following examples:

m'aneni kirabu	<i>clubs' money</i>
kaibukeni kamb'ana	<i>companies' ship</i>
tangini kitaa	<i>sound of guitars</i>
ootan taura	<i>light of lamps</i>

The thing possessed in the above examples is supposed to be singular. There is no definiteness or indefiniteness implied. The first of the above examples could mean *the clubs' money, some money of the clubs, the money of some clubs, etc.*

If the possessor is animate then possessive pronouns are used and the pattern becomes

(possessive pronoun) + (noun) + (te) + (noun)

for a singular possessor, where the te is used or not used depending on rules laid out in section 4.1.1. The pattern for a plural possessor is

(possessive pronoun) + (noun) + (plural noun)

Consider the following examples:

ana kaa Itaia	<i>Itaia's car</i>
aia kaa taama	<i>the fathers' car, car of the fathers</i>
ana baaire te Koowana	<i>the Governor's decision</i>
aia tabo katam'a	<i>the cats' place</i>

As before, the foregoing constructions can be pluralised by simply pluralising the first component, but in the above examples no phonetic change would occur as the possessed nouns are all monomorphous. Thus, the translations could just as well have been *Itaia's cars, the fathers' cars, the Governor's decisions, the cats' places.*

4.4.4 Inalienable nouns

Just as the existence or lack of a distinct plural form of a noun marks it as belonging either to the bimorphous or the monomorphous nouns, nouns also can be divided into two other classes depending on whether they can take or cannot take possessive suffixes. The nouns taking possessive suffixes have definite characteristics that distinguish them from other nouns. The following are types of nouns which take the possessive suffixes and which are called *inalienable nouns* here:

(1) Parts of the body

atuu	<i>head</i>
atuum	<i>your head</i>
kun	<i>skin</i>
kuniia	<i>their skin etc.</i>

There are a few exceptions:

ari	<i>eyebrow</i>
au ari	<i>my eyebrow</i>

(2) Intimate personal belongings, both abstract and concrete

waa	<i>canoe</i>
waau	<i>my canoe</i>
mweenga	<i>house, habitation</i>
mweengara	<i>our house</i>
aba	<i>land</i>
abamii	<i>your (plural) land</i>
maiu	<i>life</i>
maiuia	<i>their life</i>
mate	<i>death</i>
matena	<i>his death</i>
boi	<i>smell</i>
boim	<i>your (singular) smell</i>
ngare	<i>laugh, laughter</i>
ngareu	<i>my laughter</i>
matuu	<i>sleep</i>
matuura	<i>our sleep</i>

But note also the following exceptions:

auti	<i>house</i>
ara auti	<i>our house</i>
am'arake	<i>food</i>
am am'arake	<i>your food</i>
kaa	<i>car</i>
aia kaa	<i>their car</i>

(3) Family relationships

tibu	<i>grandfather; grandson</i>
tibuu	<i>my grandfather; my grandson</i>

nati	<i>son; daughter</i>
natiia	<i>their son; their daughter</i>
tama	<i>father</i>
tamana	<i>his father</i>

But note also the following exception:

karo	<i>parent</i>
au karo	<i>my parent</i>

(4) Parts of an object or in relation to an object

aa	<i>the position under</i>
aara	<i>the position under us</i>
rariki	<i>the position beside; side</i>
rarikim	<i>the position beside you; your side</i>
meaang	<i>north</i>
meaangiia	<i>the position north of them</i>

The suffixed expressions above are not usually used by themselves, but in prepositional expressions (see section 4.6).

(5) States of mind or feeling

nanokaawaki	<i>sadness</i>
nanokaawakira	<i>our sadness</i>
kukurei	<i>happiness</i>
kukureimii	<i>your happiness</i>
ingainga	<i>enthusiasm</i>
ingaingau	<i>my enthusiasm</i>
unga	<i>excitement</i>
ungaia	<i>their excitement</i>
kim'aareirei	<i>joy</i>
kim'aareireina	<i>his joy</i>

It is noted that newly formed or accepted words never belong to the above class of inalienable nouns. Inalienable nouns hardly ever take the possessive pronouns (e.g. *au tama* is not correct, and in fact is never heard).

Some inalienable nouns are rarely if ever used without suffixes:

kanana	<i>his food</i>
karara	<i>our food</i>
kana, kara	<i>(not used as nouns)</i>
nimaia	<i>their drink</i>
nima	<i>(not used as a noun)</i>

Nouns of this type are *obligatorily possessed* and are discussed in section 4.4.5.

Some nouns have both an inalienable and an alienable form which differ somewhat in meaning:

b'ai	<i>thing</i>
am b'ai	<i>your thing</i>
b'aim	<i>your dress</i>

ngake	<i>underpants; crotch</i>
au ngake	<i>my underpants</i>
ngakeu	<i>my crotch</i>
ran	<i>water; juice</i>
ana ran	<i>its water</i>
ranna	<i>its juice</i>

Sometimes the distinction is between whether the possessed thing is intimately connected or not with the possessor, as is the case in the above examples. But note the following exception:

riim	<i>your bones</i>
riim (not am rii)	<i>bones of fish, etc., that you are eating.</i>

4.4.5 Obligatorily possessed nouns

We have seen in the last section how inalienable nouns are able to take possessive suffixes, and further, how some of these are able also to take possessive pronouns which usually give them a different meaning. There is a large subclass of these inalienable nouns, which we shall call *obligatorily-possessed nouns* (OPN), which must always take possessive suffixes, and thus never occur 'unpossessed'. Cases in which the same noun seems to be used with *te* or a possessive pronoun have such entirely different meanings that one may not be justified in considering it the same noun. There are several types of OPN:

- (1) Nouns which form prepositions by affixation with *i* in front and *-n* at the end. The prepositional use of these will be discussed more fully in section 4.6. Examples:

ao	<i>surface</i> (never used alone)
aon	<i>the surface of</i>
aa	<i>underside</i> (never used alone)
aan	<i>the underside of</i>
tinaniku	<i>outside</i> (never used alone)
tinanikun	<i>the outside of</i>
eta	<i>the position above</i> (never used alone)
etan	<i>the position above it etc.</i>

The other possessive suffixes can also be used:

etara	<i>the position above us</i>
etam	<i>the position above you</i>
etaia	<i>the position above it</i>

When not possessed it is impossible to achieve the same meaning:

te ao	<i>fishline</i>
te aa	<i>a yawn</i>
te tinaniku	<i>an envelope</i>
te eta	(meaningless)

or

au ao	<i>my fishline</i>
amii aa	<i>your yawn</i>
aia tinaniku	<i>their envelope etc.</i>

(2) Past participles of verbs. As described in section 4.8.6.5 these are used as nouns as well as to form the passive voice, but as nouns they are obligatorily possessed:

tangira	<i>to love</i>
tangiraki	(not used alone as a noun)
tangirakira	<i>the loving of us</i>
orea	<i>to strike</i>
oreaki	(not used alone as a noun)
oreakiu	<i>the striking of me</i>
kana	<i>to eat</i>
kanaki	(not used alone as a noun)
kanakina	<i>the eating of it; its flavour</i>

Such words are used syntactically as follows:

e kateniua oreakina	<i>he was hit three times (lit. the hitting of him happened three times)</i>
e toki tangirakim irou	<i>I don't love you anymore (lit. the loving of you by me stopped) etc.</i>

(3) The infinitive form of transitive verbs, which is also the object-expressed form (see section 4.8.6.2), is used as a noun but is always obligatorily possessed. The meaning, when used nominally, is apparently indistinguishable from that of the past participle. Examples:

tangiram	<i>the loving of you</i>
oreaia	<i>the striking of them</i>
kanana	(does not exist in this form)

They can be freely substituted into the previous constructions:

e kateniua oreai	<i>they were hit three times</i>
e toki tangiram irou	<i>I don't love you anymore.</i>

(4) Some miscellaneous examples:

noun	meaning with possessive suffix	meaning without possessive suffix
nne	<i>place, location</i>	(not used)
aro	<i>character, manner, way</i>	<i>religion</i>
nano	<i>meaning; inside; intention</i>	<i>soul</i>
tabo	<i>extreme, end</i>	<i>place</i>
tabera	<i>top</i>	(not used)
nuuka	<i>middle</i>	(not used)

Examples of use in utterances:

kaaki ni nnena	<i>put it in its place</i>
e buaakaka arom	<i>you have bad manners</i>
nanona b'a e na roko	<i>it means that he will come</i>
nuukanibong	<i>midnight</i>
tabonibai	<i>finger</i>
taberan te nii	<i>top of a coconut tree</i>

4.4.6 Nominalisation

Non-nominal expressions can be nominalised by *te* (section 4.1.1), *tia* or *taan* (section 4.3), by possessive pronouns (section 4.5.3) or by possessive suffixes (section 4.5.4). Adjectives and verbs, both transitive and intransitive, along with their modifiers, are the types of expressions that can be nominalised in this way.

Most verbal expressions can be nominalised with *te* provided that it is not too cumbersome:

wanawana (adj.)	<i>smart, intelligent</i>
te wanawana	<i>intelligence</i>
wanawana n te nuumera	<i>smart at mathematics</i>
te wanawana n te nuumera	<i>intelligence in mathematics</i>
rangi ni wanawana	<i>very smart, very intelligent</i>
te rangi ni wanawana	(not customarily used)
oroia (v.t.)	<i>to hit it</i>
te oroia	<i>the act of hitting it</i>
orea te ataei	<i>to hit a child</i>
te orea te ataei	<i>the act of hitting a child</i>
oroia n te kai	<i>to hit him with a stick</i>
te oroia n te kai	<i>the act of hitting him with a stick</i>
kan oroingkamii	<i>to want to hit you</i>
te kan oroingkamii	<i>the wanting to hit you, the desire to hit you</i>
kaakan oroia	<i>to (habitually) want to hit them</i>
te kaakan oroia	<i>the habitual desire to hit them</i>

Nominalisations of verb phrases with a *tia* n and *na* (section 4.8.2) do not usually occur.

Nominalisation with *tia* and *taan* have been discussed in section 4.3.

Nominalisation of transitive verb forms with possessive pronouns or suffixes does not usually occur. Thus, expressions such as *ana oroia*, *au nooringkamii* etc., are not usually used.

Nominalisation of adjectives and intransitives is carried out with either the possessive pronouns or suffixes, but usually not with both. There does not seem to be a predictable pattern for selecting one or the other. Examples:

wanawana (adj.)	<i>smart, intelligent</i>
au wanawana	<i>my intelligence</i>
wanawanau	(not used)
nakonako (v.i.)	<i>to walk</i>
aia nakonako	(not usually used)
nakonakoia	<i>their walking</i>
tebotebo (v.i.)	<i>to bathe</i>
amii tebotebo	(not usually used)
tebotebomii	<i>your bathing</i>

wene (v.i.)	<i>to lie, recline</i>
ara wene	(not used)
wenera	<i>our lying</i>
oro (v.i.)	<i>to hit</i>
am oro	<i>your hitting, your blow</i>
orom	(not used)

Nominalisation of adjectives involves two complications. One is that adjectives usually contain a reduplicated element (section 4.7), and the second is that a small number of adjectives have distinct singular and plural forms (section 4.7.1).

A small number of adjectives are nominalised without the reduplicated element, but a predictable pattern for deciding whether or not to retain the reduplicated element seems to be lacking:

ab'aab'aki (adj.)	<i>big</i>
te ab'aki	<i>largeness; size</i>
ab'akina	<i>its size</i>
mariri (adj.)	<i>cold</i>
te mariri	<i>coldness</i>
maririna	<i>its coldness</i>
buaakaka (adj.)	<i>bad</i>
te buaakaka	<i>badness</i>
buaakakaia	<i>their badness</i>
anaanau (adj.)	<i>long</i>
te anau	<i>length</i>
te anaanau	<i>length</i>
anauna	<i>its length</i>
anaanauna	<i>its length</i>
kabuebue (adj.)	<i>hot</i>
te kabuebue	<i>heat, hotness</i>
kabuebuena	<i>its heat, its hotness</i>
wanawana (adj.)	<i>smart, intelligent</i>
te wanawana	<i>intelligence</i>
am wanawana	<i>your intelligence</i>
matoatoa (adj.)	<i>hard</i>
te matoa	<i>hardness</i>
te matoatoa	<i>hardness</i>
matoana	<i>its hardness</i>
matoatoana	<i>its hardness</i>
kiirarauu (adj.)	<i>jealous</i>
te kiirarauu	<i>jealousy</i>
kiirarauuia	<i>their jealousy</i>

Most of the foregoing examples of nominalisations form singular nouns, but sometimes plural nouns can be formed. Nominalisation of bimorphous adjectives tends to use the plural form to make a plural noun, singular form to make a singular noun:

rietaata (adj.)	<i>high</i> (singular)
te rieta	<i>height</i>
te rietaata	<i>height</i>
ririeta (adj.)	<i>high</i> (plural)
ririeta (n.)	<i>heights</i>
rietana	<i>its height</i>
rietaatana	<i>its height</i>
ririetana	<i>its heights</i>
ab'aab'aki (adj.)	<i>big</i> (singular)
te ab'aki	<i>largeness, size</i>
ab'akiia (adj.)	<i>their size</i>
ab'ab'aki (adj.)	<i>big</i> (plural)
ab'ab'aki	<i>sizes</i>
ab'ab'akiia	<i>their sizes</i>

The conjunction b'a *that* is used to nominalise entire sentences:

I taku	<i>I think</i>
e na roko	<i>he will come</i>
I taku b'a e na roko.	<i>I think that he will come</i>

It is curious that such nominalisations cannot be used as direct objects of transitive verbs. In the above example, *taku to say, to believe* is intransitive. The following are other examples in which this nominalisation serves as a 'de facto' object of intransitives:

ongo <i>to hear</i>
E a tia n ongo b'a ko aoraki.
<i>He has heard that you are sick.</i>
wareware <i>to read</i>
Ti wareware b'a e a tia ni koro te kaibuke ae e boou.
<i>We read that the new ship has run aground.</i>
kab'arab'ara <i>to explain</i>
E kab'arab'ara te koowana b'a e na kakeerikaaki angab'ain te tioka.
<i>The governor explained that the sugar tax would be reduced.</i>

The same sort of construction is used with adjectives:

miimii <i>amazed, surprised</i>
Ti miimii b'a ko tuai ni marurung.
<i>We're surprised that you're not well yet.</i>
tamaaroa <i>good, beautiful, pretty, appropriate</i>
E tamaaroa b'a ko na taetae moa ma ngaia.
<i>It would be good for you to talk with him first.</i>
kananokaawaki <i>discouraging, depressing</i>
E kananokaawaki b'a a tuai n nakomai taan reirei akanne.
<i>It is discouraging that those teachers have not yet come.</i>
nanokaawaki <i>sad</i>
Ko nanokaawaki b'a tuai ni kab'araa au taarau?
<i>Are you sad that I haven't yet settled my debt?</i>
kukurei <i>happy</i>
Ti kukurei b'a iai am beku ae e raoiroi.
<i>We're happy that you have a good position.</i>

The same construction is also used with passive forms of certain transitive verbs:

kaongoraaea (v.t.) *to inform (someone)*

Ti kaongoraaeaki b'a e a tia ni mate amii tia reirei.

We were informed that your teacher had died.

kanamakina (v.t.) *to suspect*

E kanamakiniaki b'a boni ngaia te tia niniia te auti.

It was suspected that he was the one who broke into the house.

uringa (v.t.) *to remember*

E a tib'a uringaki b'a akea te tioka n te titooa.

It has just been remembered that there is no sugar in the store.

ata (v.t.) *to know*

E na ataaki b'a boni ngaira aika ti karaoia.

It will be known that it was we who did it.

katanoata (v.t.) *to announce; to advertise*

E a tia ni katanoataaki b'a e na kabooaki nako ara kaa.

It has been announced that our car will be sold.

When a b'a clause is to serve as the object of a transitive verb, the regular third-person singular suffix, and not the object-expressed suffix, is used, contrary to what might be expected. Examples:

I ataia b'a akea ana m'ane.

I know that he has no money.

I tangiriko b'a ko na nakomai

I want you to come here.

Kam a tia n nooria b'a tiaki ngngai ae I rabakau n te b'ai anne.

You have seen that I am not the one who is proficient in that matter.

Ti riai n uringnga b'a tii ngaia are e kakaonimaki i buakoia kaa in te reirei.

We should remember that he is the only one who is trustworthy among the students.

When the sentence which is nominalised contains an interrogative, the word b'a is still used, contrary to what might be expected:

m'aninga (v.i.) *to forget*

I m'aninga b'a e na roko n te aoa iraua.

I forgot what time he is coming. (lit. I forgot that he will come at what time.)

titirakina (v.t.) *to ask (someone)*

A titirakiniira b'a e nga te boki anne.

They asked us where the book is. (lit. They asked us that where is that book.)

ata (v.t.) *to know*

I aki ataia b'a e nakea.

I don't know where he went. (lit. I don't know that he went where.)

kaota (v.t.) *to point out, to indicate*

Ko riai ni kaotia b'a antai are e niniia am auti.

You should point out who broke into your house.

4.5 Pronouns

4.5.1 The emphatic pronouns

ngngai	<i>I</i>
ngkoe	<i>you</i> (singular)
ngaia	<i>he, she, it</i>
ngaira	<i>we</i>
ngkamii	<i>you</i> (plural)
ngaiaa	<i>they</i>

These are not used as subjects of sentences. They are used for emphasis and for one-word responses, such as: "Who did it?" "Ngaia." *He did.*

4.5.2 The subject pronouns

I, N	<i>I</i>
ko	<i>you</i> (singular)
e	<i>he, she, it</i>
ti	<i>we</i>
kam	<i>you</i> (plural)
a	<i>they</i>

These are used as the subjects of sentences. They are always used in most types of sentences, even when the subject is explicitly stated (see section 5.). The first person singular subject pronoun is N if followed by the words na or nang, and is I in all other circumstances:

I nako Tarawa	<i>I went to Tarawa</i>
I aoraki	<i>I was sick</i>
N nangi nako	<i>I am about to go</i>
I maakua	<i>I was afraid of it</i>
N na aera?	<i>What shall I do?</i>

4.5.3 The possessive pronouns

au	<i>my</i>
am	<i>your</i> (singular)
ana	<i>his, her, its</i>
ara	<i>our</i>
amii	<i>your</i> (plural)
aia	<i>their</i>

They always precede their nouns, and are customarily written as separate words. They also serve as nominalisers of various non-nominal expressions, in much the same way as *te* does (sections 4.1.1 and 4.4.6):

aakoi	<i>kind</i>
aia aakoi	<i>their kindness</i>
kaairua	<i>to err, make a mistake</i>
au kaairua	<i>my erring; my mistake</i>
kekeiaki ni karaoa am auti	<i>to be active in building your house</i>
ara kekeiaki ni karaoa am auti	<i>our activity in building your house</i>

(see section 4.4.6 for further details).

In cases where the possessor is animate, possessive pronouns are always used with alienable nouns, even in cases where the possessor is explicitly expressed. Examples:

ana boki te tia reirei	<i>the teacher's book</i>
au katii	<i>my gun</i>
aia takaakaro ataei	<i>the childrens' game</i>
ana aakoi Itaia	<i>Itaia's kindness</i>

Nouns in the plural adopt the singular form when preceded by a possessive pronoun:

kaao	<i>oxen</i>
aia kao	<i>their oxen; their ox</i>
been	<i>coconuts</i>
au ben	<i>my coconuts; my coconut</i>

This practice appears to waste an otherwise productive feature of the language and thereby to create unnecessary ambiguities. It is an indication that the distinction between singular and plural is not considered to be important in Kiribatese.

4.5.4 The possessive suffixes

u	<i>my</i>
m	<i>your (singular)</i>
n, na	<i>his, her, its</i>
ra	<i>our</i>
mii	<i>your (plural)</i>
ia	<i>their</i>

These suffixes are customarily written as joined to their nouns, and are used with inalienable nouns only. Nouns ending in a nasal are spelled according to the modified pronunciation described in sections 2.3 and 2.4, when used with these suffixes. Examples:

tang	<i>cry; sound</i>
tangim	<i>your cry</i>
tangiu	<i>my cry</i>
tangiia	<i>their cry</i>
kun	<i>skin</i>
kuniu	<i>my skin</i>
kunim	<i>your skin</i>
kunra	<i>our skin</i>
tim	<i>a drop</i>
timwiia	<i>their drops (from them)</i>

Choice of the two alternatives for the third person singular depends on whether the possessor is explicitly expressed. If it is, the suffix *n* is used, and if not, *na* is used:

atuu	<i>head</i>
atuuna	<i>his head</i>
atuun Itaia	<i>Itaia's head</i>

These suffixes serve as nominalisers of various non-nominal expressions, in much the same way as *te* does (section 4.1.1):

uraura (adj.)	<i>red</i>
urauram	<i>your redness</i>
taka (adj. or n.)	<i>thirsty; thirst</i>
takara	<i>our thirst</i>
nanokaawaki (adj.)	<i>sad</i>
nanokaawakim	<i>your sadness</i>

(see section 4.4.6 for further details).

When an inalienable noun is used with possessive pronouns a completely different meaning is obtained, as though two different nouns were involved:

manim	<i>your bugs (parasites)</i>
am man	<i>your animal, animals; your pet, pets</i>
irau	<i>my hair</i>
au ira	<i>my pandanus-leaf strips</i>

The third person plural suffix, indicated in the above table, is used when the possessor is animate or is not indicated. Where indicated and inanimate, the third person singular suffix is used for the plural case. Examples:

kanaia	<i>their food</i>
kanaia kaao	<i>the oxen's food</i>
kanan aroka	<i>plants' food (fertilizer)</i>
rariikiia	<i>their sides</i>
rariikiia iika	<i>the fishes' sides</i>
rariikin auti	<i>the houses' sides</i>

(Beware of the unexpected pronunciation of the last example in each of the above groups (/kanannaroka/ and /rariकिनnauti/), in accordance with section 2.4)

kuniia	<i>their skin</i>
kuniia mooa	<i>the chickens' skin</i>
kunini kaai	<i>skin of plants; bark of trees</i>
tangiia	<i>their sound</i>
tangiia ataei	<i>childrens' cry</i>
tangini kitaa	<i>sound of guitars</i>

The third person plural seems to exhibit a slight tendency toward differentiating the suffixes depending on whether or not the possessor is indicated, similar to the third person singular. But this phenomenon is rare, and is perhaps most conveniently treated by considering those cases where it does occur as irregularities. Two common examples are *irou* and *nako*, which take the possessive suffixes as follows:

nako iu	<i>to me</i>
nako im	<i>to you (singular)</i>
nakon	<i>to (singular object expressed)</i>
nako ina	<i>to him</i>

nakoira	<i>to us</i>
nakoimii	<i>to you (plural)</i>
nakoiaa	<i>to them</i>
nakoia	<i>to (plural object expressed)</i>
nakoiaa	<i>to (plural object expressed)</i>
irouu	<i>by me</i>
iroum	<i>by you</i>
iroun	<i>by (singular object expressed)</i>
irouna	<i>by him</i>
iroura	<i>by us</i>
iroumii	<i>by you (plural)</i>
irouiaa	<i>by them</i>
irouia	<i>by (plural object expressed)</i>

(see also section 4.4.4.)

4.5.5 Demonstrative pronouns

There are three degrees of distance, as typified by the following locative adverbs:

ikai	<i>here (near the speaker)</i>
ikanne	<i>there (near you)</i>
ikekei	<i>there (far from us)</i>

The distinction between the last two is not very definite, but ikekei usually means further away than ikanne, and it implies some distance from both the speaker and the person spoken to. These three degrees correspond closely to similar distinctions among the demonstratives, which will be discussed shortly. Strangely, these same three degrees apparently correspond to the three 'persons' of grammar. That is, *ikai here* actually means *near the first person* and, *ikanne there* means *near the second person*, and *ikekei there* means *near the third person*, and where there is no third person under discussion it just means *at some distance from both the first and the second persons*. The demonstrative pronouns,

aei	<i>this</i>
anne	<i>that (near you)</i>
arei	<i>that (far from us)</i>
aikai	<i>these</i>
akanne	<i>those (near you)</i>
akekei	<i>those (far from us)</i>

are seen to follow this pattern. They are used after nouns, as in the following examples:

te kao aei	<i>this ox</i>
te kao anne	<i>that ox</i>
te kao arei	<i>that ox</i>
kaao aikai	<i>those oxen</i>
kaao akanne	<i>those oxen</i>
kaao akekei	<i>those oxen</i>

The demonstrative pronouns can imply a temporal as well as a spatial relationship:

te bong aei	<i>today</i> (this day)
te bong arei	<i>that day</i> (in past or future)

The forms corresponding to second person (anne, akanne) often give the idea of *what has just been referred to*, and hence serve to definitise a noun in a similar way that the definite article 'the' does in English:

te kao	<i>an ox</i>
te kao anne	<i>the ox</i>
kaao	<i>oxen</i>
kaao akanne	<i>the oxen</i>

Which of the possible interpretations is best will depend on context.

4.5.6 Relative pronouns

The relative pronouns follow the same pattern as the demonstrative pronouns described in the previous section:

ae	<i>first person singular</i>
ane	<i>second person singular</i>
are	<i>third person singular</i>
aika	<i>first person plural</i>
akana	<i>second person plural</i>
ake	<i>third person plural</i>

The same forms are used for both animate and inanimate nouns, and so all six forms given above can be rendered by *that*, *which*, or *who*. As the same forms are also used regardless of case, whether as subject or object of verb or preposition, the six forms could also be rendered by *whom*. These relative pronouns (called 'relative ligatives' by Cowell, 1951) function in almost the same way as Malay *yang* does to link adjectives to nouns. The subject pronouns are always used after the relatives, as in the following examples:

te auti ae e ab'aab'aki	<i>a big house (near me)</i>
te waa ane e keang	<i>a green canoe (near you)</i>
tinana are e kara	<i>his old mother (far from us)</i>
atiibu aika a uangiingi	<i>tiny stones (near me)</i>
arokam akana a mate	<i>your dead plants (near you)</i>
aomata ake a aoraki	<i>sick people (far from us)</i>

As in the case of the demonstratives, a temporal rather than a spatial relationship may be indicated:

te kukurei ae e kakamaiu	<i>the merry party (presently going on)</i>
te kukurei are e kakamaiu	<i>the merry party (some time ago) etc.</i>

Also as in the case of the demonstratives, the second person forms may indicate definiteness rather than proximity to the listener:

te raanti ae e birim'aaka	<i>a fast launch</i>
te raanti ane e birim'aaka	<i>the fast launch</i>

As a further exception, the first person relatives are used in a general sense when no definiteness, indefiniteness, spatial nor temporal relationships are intended:

te uee ae e tikiraoi *a pretty flower; the pretty flower*

Choice of interpretation is usually determined by context.

When demonstratives are used in addition to adjectives the order is either

(noun) + (relative) + (subject pronoun) + (adjective) + (demonstrative)

or

(noun) + (demonstrative) + (relative) + (object pronoun) + (adjective)

where (noun) may include te or a possessive pronoun:

te kirii ae e kakamaaku aei	<i>this fearsome dog</i>
abana are e raroa arei	<i>his distant land, that distant</i> <i>land of his</i>
ana taeka anne ane e karaaurau	<i>his slow speech, that slow speech</i> <i>of his</i>

Note that there must be agreement in number and person between the relative and the demonstrative in these cases.

The above examples show that adjectives are used as though they were clauses containing a verb. In Kiribatese there is really no distinction between adjective clauses and just plain adjectives anyway, and thus the examples also show how to construct adjective clauses:

te booti ae e beibeti	<i>a boat that is floating, a floating</i> <i>boat</i>
aoti ake a am'arake	<i>horses that ate</i>
tamau ae e na nako Tarawa	<i>my father, who will go to Tarawa</i>
aia m'ane ae e a tia ni bua	<i>their money which was lost</i>

There is no distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive adjective clauses. Thus,

te kaibuke ae e koro *the ship which ran aground; the ship, which*
ran aground

Of course, the first rendering specifies which ship we are talking about, while the second rendering merely adds information. There is no reason why written Kiribatese could not use the comma to make the same distinction, if desired.

4.5.6.1 Apposition

Relatives also can link noun to noun in order to indicate a sort of apposition:

natina ae te tia reirei	<i>his son, the teacher</i>
Itaia ae te koowana	<i>Itaia, the Governor</i>
te kaibuke ae te Naareau	<i>the ship, Naareau</i>
ara kai ae te nii	<i>our tree, a coconut tree etc.</i>

4.5.7 Person demonstratives

masculine singular	teuaaei	<i>this man</i>
	teuaanne	<i>that man (near you)</i>
	teuaarei	<i>that man (far from us)</i>
feminine singular	neiei	<i>this woman</i>
	neienne	<i>that woman (near you)</i>
	neierei	<i>that woman (far from us)</i>
general plural	naakai	<i>these people</i>
	naakanne	<i>those people (near you)</i>
	naakekei	<i>those people (far from us)</i>
masculine plural	uaakai	<i>these men</i>
	uaakanne	<i>those men (near you)</i>
	uaakekei	<i>those men (far from us)</i>

Use of these words roughly follows the pattern of the demonstratives. They are used in the same way as nouns, and only for persons. The general plural forms can indicate a group of men, or of women, or of mixed men and women. Thus, *naakai* can indicate a group of men, but in this case *uaakai*, being more explicit, is considered preferable.

When these are used in expressions where they would be expected to be followed by relative pronouns, the following contracted forms are used:

teuaae	=	teuaaei ae
teuaane	=	teuaanne ane
teuaare	=	teuaarei are
neie	=	neiei ae
neiene	=	neienne ane
neiere	=	neierei are
naaka	=	naakai aika
naakana	=	naakanne akana
naake	=	naakekei ake
uaaka	=	uaakai aika
uaakana	=	uaakanne akana
uaake	=	uaakekei ake

Their use presents no unexpected patterns:

naake a aoraki	<i>these sick people</i>
teuaare e nakonako	<i>that man who is walking</i>
naake a na nako Tarawa	<i>those people who will go to Tarawa</i>
neiene e iowaawa	<i>that mean woman</i>

A different interpretation is possible regarding the structure of the relative pronouns and person demonstratives. In the descriptions given above they are always followed by the corresponding subject pronouns to form sentences. In each case the subject pronouns are written apart from them as separate words. One could alternatively say that the subject pronouns are not required in such constructions, in which case the forms given above for the relatives and person demonstrative contractions would have to be provided with suffixes to replace the subject pronouns, resulting in:

aee	aikaa
anee	akanaa
aree	akea

and similarly for the person demonstrative contractions. This would obviate the need of stacking pronouns after pronouns, but it is now accepted practice to require that the subject pronouns be written separately. There was lack of uniformity in this regard in materials written prior to the late 1970s.

4.5.7.1 Neuter demonstratives

These are handled in the same way as the person demonstratives in the previous section:

singular	baei	<i>this, this thing</i>
	baenne	<i>that, that thing</i>
	baerei	<i>that, that thing</i>
plural	baikai	<i>these, these things</i>
	baikanne	<i>those, those things</i>
	baikekei	<i>those, those things</i>

The above forms are used colloquially only, and in formal writing the corresponding forms

b'ai aei	b'aaï aikai
b'ai anne	b'aaï akanne
b'ai arei	b'aaï akekei

are used. The neuter demonstratives can be thought of as contractions of the above set. They are used with *te*, *taian* or possessive pronouns in the same way as nouns:

te baei	<i>this thing</i>
aia baerei	<i>that thing of theirs</i>
ara baikekei	<i>those things of ours</i>
au baikanne	<i>those things of mine</i>

This set, in formal writing, would be written *te b'ai aei*, *aia b'ai arei*, *ara b'ai akekei*, and *au b'ai akanne*.

4.5.8 Interrogative pronouns

The only ones are

teraa?	<i>what?</i>
antai?	<i>who?; whom?</i>
antena?	<i>whose?</i>

Their use presents no unexpected features:

Teraa ae ko nooria?	<i>What did you see?</i>
Ko noora teraa?	<i>What did you see?</i>
Antai ae e roko?	<i>Who came?</i>
E roko antai?	<i>Who came?</i>
Antai ae ko nooria?	<i>Whom did you see?</i>
Antena bentira aei?	<i>Whose pencil is this?</i>

There are other interrogative words, but they function in a syntactically different way (like verbs, etc.). There is also the interrogative root *ira-* which is combined with noun classifiers as described in section 4.2:

<i>iraua?</i>	<i>how many</i> (general things)?
<i>iraman?</i>	<i>how many</i> (people, etc.)?
<i>irawaa?</i>	<i>how many</i> (boats, canoes)?

4.6 Prepositions

Kiribatese has a very small number of true prepositions:

<i>i, n</i>	<i>at; in; on</i>
<i>mai, man</i>	<i>from; since</i>
<i>nako, nakon</i>	<i>to; toward; towards; at</i>

The forms which do not end in *n* are used only with place names:

<i>i Tarawa</i>	<i>at Tarawa; on Tarawa</i>
<i>mai Aotiteeria</i>	<i>from Australia</i>
<i>nako Tiabaan</i>	<i>to Japan</i>
<i>n te auti</i>	<i>at home</i>
<i>man te kaibuke</i>	<i>from the ship</i>
<i>nakon titooa</i>	<i>to the stores</i>
<i>n tawanou</i>	<i>at noon</i>
<i>mang ngke e tairiki</i>	<i>since last night</i>
<i>nakon tanimaeaontaai</i>	<i>toward afternoon</i>

Note that *man* becomes *mang* if following word begins with *ng*. The preposition *nako* is used with possessive suffixes of section 4.5.4 by changing its base to *nakoi* (or by inserting an *i*):

<i>nakoiu</i>	<i>to me; toward me; at me</i>
<i>nakoim</i>	<i>to you; toward you; at you</i>
<i>nakoina</i>	<i>to him; to her; to it, etc.</i>
<i>nakoira</i>	<i>to us, etc.,</i>
<i>nakoimii</i>	<i>to you (plural), etc.</i>
<i>nakoiia</i>	<i>to them, etc.</i>

This word is irregular in that there is also the form *nakoia* or *nakoiia* meaning *to* followed by an explicit third person plural object (see section 4.8.6.4), as in the following:

<i>nakoia taan reirei</i>	<i>to the teachers</i>
<i>nakoia mooa</i>	<i>to the chickens</i>
<i>nakoia naakekei</i>	<i>to those people</i>

But when the object is inanimate *nakon* is used:

<i>nakon taabo akekei</i>	<i>to those places</i>
<i>nakon taian nii</i>	<i>to the coconut trees</i>

following the same pattern as the transitive verb endings of section 4.8.6.4.

Other locative and time expressions such as *for on, under, before, etc.*, are formed in Kiribatese by combining the preposition *i* with certain suffixed nouns. Examples:

aa	<i>the space under (rarely used alone)</i>
aana	<i>the space under it</i>
aan te taibora	<i>the space under the table</i>
i aan te taibora	<i>under the table</i>
i aau	<i>under me</i>
ao	<i>the top surface (rarely used alone)</i>
aona	<i>its top surface</i>
aoni marawa	<i>the sea surface</i>
i aoni marawa	<i>on the sea, on the sea surface</i>
i aora	<i>on us</i>
eta	<i>the position above</i>
etan te auti	<i>the position above the house</i>
i etan te auti	<i>above the house</i>
i etamii	<i>above you</i>
meaang	<i>north</i>
meaangira	<i>position north of us</i>
i meaangira	<i>north of us</i>
rou	<i>self (not used alone)</i>
irouna	<i>by him (expressing agent of some action)</i>
irouu	<i>by me</i>
iroun Tioon	<i>by Tioon</i>
m'aa	<i>the position ahead; the position in front</i>
m'aaina	<i>the position in front of it</i>
m'aain te titooa	<i>the position in front of the store</i>
i m'aain te titooa	<i>in front of the store</i>

Note that the compounds of rou are written as one word, while in the other cases the i is written in front as a separate word. This is now the present writing convention, and the reason is that while rou can never stand by itself the others can. In written text before the late 1970s, however, this rule was often not observed.

The use of such compound constructions provides the following list of phrases that are used as prepositions:

i aon	<i>on; per; more than, over</i>
i aan	<i>under, below; less than</i>
i bukin	<i>for, on behalf of; because of; behind</i>
i etan	<i>above, over</i>
i meaangin	<i>north of</i>
i mainikun	<i>east of</i>
i maiakin	<i>south of</i>
i maeao	<i>west of</i>
i mwiin	<i>behind; after</i>
i m'aain	<i>in front of, ahead of; before</i>
i marenan	<i>between</i>
i buakon	<i>among</i>
i nuukan	<i>in the middle of</i>
i nanon	<i>in, inside of</i>
i tinanikun	<i>outside of; beyond</i>
i rarikin	<i>beside, at the side of</i>
i tokin	<i>at the end of</i>
i roun	<i>by (expressing agent of some action)</i>

It was noted that when the object of the preposition is expressed by a pronoun, the possessive suffixes are used. When the object is explicit, then the possessive indicator *n* is used. Use of the possessive suffixes is independent of whether the object (if plural) is animate or inanimate, in contrast to verb objects and objects of the root *nako* discussed above. Examples:

i aon te taibora	<i>on the table</i>
i aona	<i>on it</i>
i aoia	<i>on them</i>
teuana te taaraa i aon temanna	<i>one dollar per person</i>
i aon te m'aiti anne	<i>in addition to that quantity</i>
i aan te taibora	<i>under the table</i>
i aara	<i>under us</i>
karako i aan nimaau	<i>less than five</i>
i bukin itaia	<i>for Itaia</i>
i bukimii	<i>for you</i>
i bukin te karau	<i>because of the rain</i>
i bukin te kaibuke	<i>behind the ship; for the ship;</i> <i>because of the ship</i>
i m'aa'in te titooa	<i>in front of the store</i>
i m'aa'in rokona	<i>before his arrival</i>
i m'aa'iu	<i>in front of me</i>
i marenan te kai ma te auti	<i>between the tree and the house</i>
i marenara ma te nii	<i>between us and the coconut tree</i>

4.7 Adjectives

Adjectives might have been appropriately discussed in the section on verbs, because in Kiribatese adjectives are structurally and functionally similar to intransitive verbs. In fact, Cowell (1951) calls them 'verbal adjectives'. However, adjectives have a characteristic which distinguishes them from verbs. Kiribatese adjectives can be modified by certain expressions, such as *rangin very* that are not generally used with intransitive verbs. This will be the criterion used here as the distinguishing characteristic. Adjectives have another typical characteristic, namely, most of them seem to contain a reduplicated element. The reduplicated element may be a morpheme or a syllable, or perhaps a combination of morphemes or syllables. The following list contains adjectives which always have a reduplicated element. The reduplicated element indicated is deduced on the assumption that no additional element has been inserted between the reduplicated elements:

adjective	meaning	reduplicated element
mainaina	<i>white</i>	ina
kimototo	<i>short</i>	to
anaanau	<i>long</i>	ana
ab'aab'aki	<i>big</i>	ab'a
mimitong	<i>glorious</i>	mi
mariri	<i>cold</i>	ri
ingainga	<i>enthusiastic</i>	inga
uarereke	<i>small</i>	re
kim'aareirei	<i>joyful</i>	rei
kakannato	<i>important</i>	ka
marurung	<i>healthy</i>	ru

adjective	meaning	reduplicated element
kangkang	<i>delicious</i>	kang
tokonoonoo	<i>rambunctious</i>	noo
buaakaka	<i>bad</i>	ka
takanana	<i>slimy</i>	na

There are also some adjectives in which the reduplication occurs with the insertion of extraneous elements, or is inexact, such as in the following list:

buubura	<i>big</i>
rietaata	<i>tall</i>
uangiingi	<i>tiny</i>
raoiroi	<i>good</i>
beebete	<i>light (in weight)</i>

Adjectives which have no trace of a reduplicated element are rare; the following are examples:

m'aitoro	<i>cold</i>
kaunga	<i>exciting</i>
bati	<i>many</i>
karako	<i>few</i>
tamaaroa	<i>fine, good</i>
tikiraoi	<i>beautiful</i>
tikibuaka	<i>ugly</i>

There is also a group of adjectives which have two forms, one of which has a reduplicated or almost reduplicated element and a slightly different meaning from the other. The semantic effect of the reduplication here is an intensification of degree:

kabuee	kabuebue	<i>hot</i>
m'aitoro	m'aitorotoro	<i>cold</i>
mmaten	mmatenten	<i>thick</i>
m'aawa	m'awaawa	<i>loose</i>
maawa	mawaawa	<i>blue</i>
matoa	matoatoa	<i>hard, firm</i>
marau	maraurau	<i>soft</i>
makana	makanakana	<i>soft</i>
binaaine	binabinaaine	<i>effeminate</i>
warebwe	warebwerebwe	<i>wide</i>

There are also adjectives with reduplication and imperfect reduplication for which the two forms have widely different meanings:

maran	<i>smooth, slick</i>
maranran	<i>slippery</i>
rawata	<i>numerous</i>
rawaawata	<i>heavy</i>

It is difficult to reconcile the above examples within a comprehensive scheme. Perhaps reduplication of a morpheme was first used to intensify the meaning, whereupon subsequent modification sometimes obscured its origin with the original unreduplicated form being lost. In other cases, perhaps only the form with the reduplicated element remained popular. More will be said on the general matter of reduplication in section 4.11.

4.7.1 Bimorphous adjectives

A very small number of adjectives are bimorphous, in that they have distinct singular and plural forms, similar to bimorphous nouns (see section 4.4.1).

Examples:

ab'aab'aki	<i>big</i> (singular)
ab'ab'aki	<i>big</i> (plural)
rietaata	<i>tall</i> (singular)
ririeta	<i>tall</i> (plural)
anaanau	<i>long</i> (singular)
ananau	<i>long</i> (plural)
rairoi	<i>good</i> (singular)
raraoi	<i>good</i> (plural)
buaakaka	<i>bad</i> (singular)
bubuaka	<i>bad</i> (plural)

Here the tendency seems to be to construct the plural form by shortening a long vowel of the singular form, opposite to the way the plurals of nouns are formed. Use of the plural forms of adjectives presents no unexpected patterns. Consider the following examples:

te kao ae e ab'aab'aki	<i>a big ox</i>
kaao aika a ab'ab'aki	<i>big oxen</i>
taiani kao aika a ab'ab'aki	<i>big oxen</i>
te tama ae e rairoi	<i>a good father</i>
taama aika a raraoi	<i>good fathers</i>
taian tama aika a raraoi	<i>good fathers</i>

4.7.2 Comparison of adjectives

Comparison is effected by adding the word *riki* *more*; *additional* after the adjective:

rairoi	<i>good</i>
rairoi riki	<i>better</i>
rietaata	<i>high</i>
rietaata riki	<i>higher</i>
ririeta	<i>high</i> (plural)
ririeta riki	<i>higher</i> (plural)

Comparative sentences are constructed with the use of *nakon* *than*:

E rairoi riki te kaa aei nakon arei.
This car is better than that one.

E rietaata riki te nii nakon te kaina,
The coconut tree is taller than the pandanus tree.

A ririeta riki nii nakoia aomata.
Coconut trees are taller than people.

A commonly used type of comparison is achieved by using the adjectives as nouns and using possessive pronouns or the possessive suffixes. To express equality words such as *tii te boo the same* or *bootau ma to be equal to* can be used:

Tii te boo raoiroin am mm'akuri ma ana mm'akuri teuaarei.
Your work is just as good as his.

The literal meaning is something like *The goodness of your work is the same as that of his work.*

E aki bootau am aakoi tarim.
You are not as kind as your brother.

Here the literal meaning is something like *Your kindness is not equal to that of your brother.*

To express inequality words like *korakora riki stronger*, etc., can be used:

E korakora riki urauran taian tom'aato nakon taian ooranti.
Tomatoes are redder than oranges.

The literal meaning would be something like *The redness of tomatoes is stronger than that of oranges.*

4.7.2.1 Superlatives

The superlative form is constructed by adding *moan te* before the adjective:

<i>raoiroi</i>	<i>good</i>
<i>moan te raoiroi</i>	<i>best</i>
<i>ab'aab'aki</i>	<i>big</i>
<i>moan te ab'aab'aki</i>	<i>biggest</i>

Sometimes these forms are used colloquially to indicate *very* instead of the actual superlative.

4.7.3 Adjective clauses

Simple adjectives are always used as though they were clauses, in that a relative pronoun is always present in even the simplest cases of adjectives modifying nouns. Examples:

<i>tinebu</i>	<i>heavy</i>
<i>te b'aab'aa ae e tinebu</i>	<i>a heavy coconut-leaf purse</i>
<i>roroo</i>	<i>black</i>
<i>atiibu ake a roroo</i>	<i>black stones; those black stones</i>

Various types of adjective clauses are formed simply by substituting a sentence type structure for the adjective. The following are examples in which the noun modified is the subject of the clause:

are e a tib'a roko mai Tarawa
who just arrived from Tarawa

ae iai waana ae e uraura
who has a red canoe

aika a rooroko ni katoa nam'akaina
which come every month

akana a ataa te riai
who are courteous (lit. who know what is correct)

are e koowana ngkoa
who used to be the governor

naake iai aia booti
those who have boats

akana akea aia m'ane
who do not have money

ae akea ana kanrin
who does not have the admission price

neiere iai ana b'akaereti ae e mawaawa
that woman who has a blue dress

are iai taningana ake a uarereke
who has small ears

Where the noun modified is the subject of a clause indicating location, the relative pronoun and verb are often omitted:

te auti are e mena n te kaawa	<i>the house which is in the town</i>
te auti are n te kaawa	<i>the house in the town</i>
te auti n te kaawa	<i>the house in the town</i>

This last abbreviated construction can be ambiguous, as the n could have either a locative or a genitive function.

te atiibu ane e mena i nanoni baim
the stone which is in your hand

te atiibu ane i nanoni baim
the stone in your hand

te atiibu i nanoni baim
the stone in your hand

te karanga are e mena i tinanikun te maunga
the river which is beyond the mountain

te karanga are i tinanikun te maunga
the river beyond the mountain

te karanga i tinanikun te maunga
the river beyond the mountain

The following are examples in which the noun modified is the object of the clause:

are ko nooria ngkoananoa	<i>that you saw yesterday</i>
aika a nang tiringiia aomata	<i>that the people are about to kill</i>
ake N na noori ikekei	<i>that I will see there</i>
ake N na nooriia ikekei	<i>whom I will see there</i>
ane kam a tib'a kawaria	<i>whom you just met</i>

Note that in all of these cases the verb form corresponding to the 'object not expressed' form is used, contrary to what might be expected. The noun can also be the subject of a passive in the clause:

aika a tiringaki irouia tautia
who were killed by soldiers
 are e oreaki iroun te tia reirei
who was hit by the teacher
 ane e kab'akaaki
which was dropped
 ake a na kab'akaaki
which will be dropped

If the noun modified is the object of a preposition the word *iai* meaning something like *thereto*, *hereto*, or *maiai* meaning *therefrom*, *thereto* can sometimes be used, if the noun phrase is inanimate. If it is animate an *irou-* form or an independent pronoun follows the preposition. If a presosition is used instead of *iai* or *maiai* it must contain the object-not-expressed suffix (see section 4.6), contrary to what might be expected. Examples:

are ti nako iai
to which we went
 are ti nakoina
to whom we went
 (te b'angab'anga) are e tiinako maiiai te ran
(a hole) from which water was pouring

(The word *maiai* is a contraction of *mai iai*).

teuaare ko na rimoanna
the man whom you will go in front of
 are ko tekateka i aona
that you sat on
 ake a mena i buakoia
whom they are among
 aika a reke i bukiia te m'ane
for whom the money was obtained
 teuaare a kamateaki kirii akanne irouna
the man by whom those dogs were killed

The word *iai* is used in various adjective clauses with the meaning *concerning which*, *about which* or *because of which*, which in English would be rendered with the noun modified being the object of such a preposition. Examples:

ae kam un iai	<i>which you are angry over (about)</i>
are e nako Tarawa iai	<i>concerning which he went to Tarawa</i>
teraa ae ko ngare iai?	<i>what did you laugh about?</i>
akana ti na kekeiaki iai	<i>which we shall be concerned with</i>
are a tabetabe iai	<i>which they were working with</i>

This simple and concise construction is very productive and is very commonly used.

4.8 Verbs

4.8.1 Intransitive verbs

These have similar structure and function to adjectives. Some common intransitive verbs are listed below:

nako	<i>to go</i>
nakonako	<i>to walk</i>
tekateka	<i>to sit (down)</i>
tei	<i>to stand</i>
kawakawa	<i>to crawl</i>
ngare	<i>to laugh</i>
tang	<i>to cry</i>
matuu	<i>to sleep</i>
am'arake	<i>to eat</i>
tebotebo	<i>to bathe</i>
mm'akuri	<i>to work</i>
takaakaro	<i>to play; to dance</i>
taetae	<i>to talk</i>
tintim	<i>to drip</i>
rin	<i>to enter</i>

As can be seen from the above examples, intransitive verbs can have any ending that is phonetically possible. Their form does not change, by taking suffixes or otherwise.

4.8.1.1 Intransitive verbs with implied objects

These words convey the idea of action upon a generic object, but function grammatically as intransitive verbs. They all consist of two elements. The first element specifies the action, and the second element specifies the object. It seems justifiable to write such compounds as one word because they are invariable. Consider the following examples:

orea (v.t.)	<i>to hit</i>
ben	<i>mature coconut</i>
oroben	<i>to split open coconuts</i>
kinika (v.t.)	<i>to pinch</i>
uee	<i>flower</i>
kinikauee	<i>to gather flowers</i>
korea (v.t.)	<i>to cut</i>
karewe	<i>toddy</i>
korokarewe	<i>to cut toddy</i>
kai	<i>wood</i>
korokai	<i>to cut wood</i>
boki	<i>book</i>
koroboki	<i>to write</i>
rawea (v.t.)	<i>to catch</i>
taamnei	<i>picture</i>
rawetaamnei	<i>to take pictures</i>

urakina (v.t.)	<i>to carry</i>
tano	<i>sand, soil</i>
urakitano	<i>to carry sand</i>
aia	<i>firewood</i>
urakiaia	<i>to carry firewood</i>
atama	<i>gravel</i>
urakiatama	<i>to carry gravel</i>
ran	<i>water</i>
urakiran	<i>to carry water</i>
kabooa (v.t.)	<i>to bring together</i>
birim'aaka	<i>fast</i>
kaboobirim'aaka	<i>to have a race</i>
rabakau	<i>skilled; talented</i>
kaboorabakau	<i>to have a contest</i>
rikoa (v.t.)	<i>to gather</i>
maange	<i>trash</i>
rikomaange	<i>to gather up trash</i>

Some words seem to have the same structure and function, but the meaning of one of the elements is not clear, or perhaps has been lost. Examples:

iti	(meaning not clear)
ran	<i>water</i>
itiran	<i>to take water (from a well, etc).</i>
newe	<i>tongue; (another meaning?)</i>
aba	<i>land</i>
neweaba	<i>to sightsee, go sightseeing</i>

4.8.1.2 Intransitives used as transitives

Some intransitive verbs, such as those in the following list.

am'arake	<i>to eat</i>
mooi	<i>to drink</i>
mataku	<i>to watch</i>
takaakaro	<i>to play</i>
ongo	<i>to hear</i>

can be used in a transitive sense, with their (pseudo) object following after an interposed *n*. These constructions are far different from the usual transitive constructions (see section 4.8.6). Examples:

Ko am'arake *n* te ben?
Did you eat coconut?

A na mooi *n* te karewe.
They are going to drink toddy.

Ti na mataku *n* te taamnei.
We're going to watch the movie.

I a takaakaro *n* te butibooro.
I'm playing football.

A tuai n ongo te rongorongo anne.
They haven't heard that news yet.

Note that ongo seems to be irregular in that it does not take n.

4.8.2 Tenses and aspects

Tense of a verb is indicated by particles or by context, and not by inflected forms. Tense formation is the same for transitives and intransitives, and so the latter will be used here to illustrate the various methods of tense formation. Transitive verbs follow the same pattern of tense formation.

4.8.2.1 Simple past and present

The same form is used for both the present and the past, which consists of just the root form of the verb without any particles:

I taetae	<i>I talked</i>
ko nako	<i>you went</i>
ti ngare	<i>we laughed</i>
a matuu	<i>they slept</i>

The above were all translated into the past tense. The same structure is used for the simple present tense also, but context almost always distinguishes the two cases where such a distinction is important. If contrary evidence is lacking, one will usually be safe in interpreting this construction as past tense. Sometimes this same structure is used colloquially for the present progressive, but not in formal speech or writing.

4.8.2.2 Present and past progressive

This indicates an action currently in progress or in progress at some past time. The tense is formed by inserting the particle a before the verb:

I a taetae	<i>I am talking</i>
ko a nako	<i>you are going</i>
ti a ngare	<i>we are laughing</i>
a a matuu	<i>they are sleeping</i>

For emphasis, tabe n or kume n are substituted for a:

I tabe n taetae	<i>I am talking</i>
ko tabe n nako	<i>you are going</i>
ti kume ni ngare	<i>we are laughing</i>
a kume ni matuu	<i>they are sleeping</i>

The above examples were all translated into the present progressive, but they could represent progressive action in the past. Context will usually allow one to distinguish in cases where distinction is important. If contrary evidence is lacking one will usually be safe in interpreting this construction as present progressive.

4.8.2.3 Future tense

The future tense is formed by putting the particle *na* before the verb, as in the following examples:

<i>ti na matuu</i>	<i>we will sleep, we are going to sleep</i>
<i>e na taetae</i>	<i>he will speak, he is going to speak</i>

4.8.2.4 Perfect tenses

The expression *a tia n* preceding a verb indicates action completed. In the absence of contrary indications from context this construction corresponds to present perfect:

<i>I a tia n taetae</i>
<i>I have spoken</i>
<i>kam a tia n tebotebo</i>
<i>you have bathed</i>

But it can also indicate past perfect where context requires:

<i>Ti a tia n am'arake ngke e roko.</i>
<i>We had already eaten when he came.</i>
<i>I a tia n roko ngke ko taetae.</i>
<i>I had already arrived when you spoke.</i>

Future perfect is indicated in a similar way, by the expression *na tia n* preceding the verb:

<i>Ngkana kam roko ao ti na tia n nako.</i>
<i>When you come we shall already have left.</i>
<i>E na tia ni mate ngkana e roko te taokita.</i>
<i>He will have died by the time the doctor arrives.</i>

4.8.2.5 Aspects

Besides the tense markers described in foregoing sections, verbs have a simple and a continuous aspect. The continuous aspect is usually formed by reduplicating part of the simple aspect form (see section 4.11.1). The simple aspect is used for an action performed or to be performed once, and the continuous aspect is used for actions which are repeatedly, continuously, habitually or intermittently carried out. Syntactically the two aspects are the same, and can be used alternatively in any tense situation.

The following examples illustrate the contexts in which each of these aspects is used:

simple aspect

<i>E nako Abemaama.</i>	<i>E a tia n nako.</i>
<i>He went to Abemaama.</i>	<i>He has left.</i>
<i>E na kana te raiti.</i>	<i>E tangira te m'ane.</i>
<i>He will eat rice (once).</i>	<i>He wants money.</i>

continuous aspect

E naanako Abemaama.

He (habitually or repeatedly) goes to Abemaama.

E a tia ni kaakana te raiti.

He used to (habitually) eat rice.

E taatangira te m'ane.

He likes money.

E taatangira te ika ngke e mamaeka i Kiribati.

He liked fish when he lived in Kiribati.

When used negatively, the continuous aspect sometimes conveys the idea that something is not being done over a somewhat long interval of time, whereas the simple aspect refers to a particular event which does not happen:

simple aspect

E aki roko.

He didn't come (at that particular time).

Ti aki wene.

We didn't lie down (at that particular time).

continuous aspect

E aki rooroko.

He hasn't come (as if expected at any time).

Ti aki weewene n te ruu aei.

We don't (habitually) lie down in this room.

4.8.2.6 Summary of tense and aspect use

The following examples illustrate the various combinations of tense and aspect commonly used:

simple past present

E nako Tarawa.

He went to Tarawa.

E kana te ika.

He ate fish.

simple future

E na nako Tarawa.

He'll go to Tarawa.

E na kana te ika.

He'll eat fish.

simple perfect

E a tia n nako Tarawa.

He has gone to Tarawa.

E a tia ni kana te ika.

He has eaten the fish.

simple future perfect

E na tia n nako Tarawa ngkana ti roko.
He'll have gone to Tarawa by the time we come.

E na tia ni kana te ika ngkana e reke te ben.
He'll have eaten the fish by the time the coconut is ready.

simple progressive

E a nako Tarawa ngkai.
He's now on his way to Tarawa.

E a kana te ika.
He's eating the fish.

continuous past present

E naanako Tarawa ni katoa ririki.
He goes to Tarawa every year.

E kaakana te ika.
He eats fish.

continuous future

E na naanako Tarawa ngkana e toki aorakina.
He'll start going to Tarawa when he's recovered.

E na kaakana te ika ngkana e reke rabakauna n akawa.
He'll eat fish when he gets good at fishing.

continuous perfect

E a tia n naanako Tarawa.
He has (repeatedly) gone to Tarawa (but now doesn't go any more).

E a tia ni kaakana te ika.
He has (repeatedly) eaten fish (but now he doesn't eat fish any more).

continuous future perfect

E na tia n naanako Tarawa ngkana a bane n nako maiai ana koraki.
He'll be finished going to Tarawa when his family has all left.

E na toki ni kaakana te ika ngkana e kabooaki nako waana.
He'll be finished eating fish when his canoe is sold.

(Note that in the two above categories of continuous perfect the emphasis is on stopping the action, and toki is sometimes more appropriate than tia.)

continuous progressive

E a naanako Tarawa.
He is presently going (repeatedly) to Tarawa.

E a kaakana te ika.
He presently eats fish.

Kiribatese verbs are not usually thought of as having such tenses. The foregoing outline may thus seem a little contrived, and is included mainly for the convenience of those wishing to find equivalents of the tenses in English.

4.8.3 The imperative

The imperative mood is usually indicated by just the root form of the verb:

matuu!	<i>sleep!</i>
taetae!	<i>talk!</i>

The imperative form for transitive verbs includes the appropriate object suffix:

kanna!	<i>eat it!</i>
oroia!	<i>hit him!</i>
tuangiira!	<i>tell us!</i>
kabooa te ika!	<i>buy fish!</i>

(see section 4.8.6.) The remainder of this section is limited to a discussion of intransitive verbs as the transitives present no complications in the formation of the imperative.

There is a small group of intransitive verbs which have distinct imperative forms, which will be called *bimorphous* verbs here. Apparently no transitive verbs have this feature. The imperative forms of these verbs are usually derived from the root form by lengthening a vowel:

nako	<i>to go</i>
naako!	<i>go!</i>
tei	<i>to stand</i>
teei!	<i>stand!</i>
ruo	<i>to descend, go down, come down</i>
ruuo!	<i>come down!</i>
wene	<i>to lie down</i>
weene!	<i>lie down!</i>
biri	<i>to run</i>
biiri!	<i>run!</i>

An imperative mood for first person plural is formed in exactly the same way as simple future sentences. Thus, these forms are always ambiguous unless context or circumstance clarifies the meaning:

Ti na nako.	<i>We're going to go.</i>
Ti na nako!	<i>Let's go!</i>
Ti na taetae.	<i>We're going to talk.</i>
Ti na taetae!	<i>Let's talk! etc.</i>

Note that the non-imperative form of bimorphous verbs is used.

There is also a sort of colloquial imperative formed in same way as the ordinary future indicative using the second person:

Ko na wene.	<i>You're going to lie down.</i>
Ko na wene!	<i>Lie down!</i>
Kam na kukurei.	<i>You're going to be happy.</i>
Kam na kukurei!	<i>Be happy!</i>

again using the non-imperative forms of bimorphous verbs.

The negative imperative is formed by the particle *tai* before the verb:

Tai tekateka!	<i>Don't sit down!</i>
Tai ngare!	<i>Don't laugh!</i>
Tai taetae!	<i>Don't talk!</i>

When *tai* is used with a bimorphous verb, the root form is used:

Naako!	<i>Go!</i>
Tai nako!	<i>Don't go!</i>
Weene!	<i>Lie down!</i>
Tai wene!	<i>Don't lie down!</i>

The negative imperative can also be formed by the same construction as used in the negative future tense — by inserting *na aki* in all persons (with the possible exception of first person singular):

Ko na aki nako!	<i>Don't go!</i>
Kam na aki matuu!	<i>Don't sleep!</i>
Ti na aki un!	<i>Let's not be angry!</i>
E na aki takaakaro!	<i>He shouldn't play! (Would that he not play!)</i>
A na aki tang!	<i>They shouldn't cry! (Would that they not cry!)</i>
Ti na aki kabooa!	<i>Let's not buy it!</i>

Again, these sentences are ambiguous in that they can also be interpreted as indicative mood. The words *aki* and *akii* can be used interchangeably. In any case where one of these words is used, the other can be substituted. From here on only the simpler *aki* will be used in the examples.

A sort of imperative mood is constructed using the words *ke* or *bia* and used in a somewhat different context. The word *ke* is used just before the subject pronoun, while *bia* is used just following it. The *ke* constructions are used in the third person only and not with the auxiliaries *tia* and *na*, and it takes the imperative form of bimorphous verbs:

Ke e naako!	<i>Let him go! (It's alright if he goes.)</i>
Ke a am'arake!	<i>Let them eat! (It's alright if they eat.)</i>

The *bia* expressions can be used with *tia* but not with *na*. It seems characteristic of Kiribatese to limit the productiveness of many constructions such as this. The *bia* forms often give the idea of hoping:

E bia nako!	<i>I hope he goes! (Would that he go.)</i>
E bia tia n nako!	<i>I hope he has gone!</i>
I bia tokanikai!	<i>I hope I win!</i>
Kam bia roko!	<i>I hope you come!</i>
A bia tia n roko raoi!	<i>I hope they have arrived safely!</i>
A bia tia n reke baikekei!	<i>I hope those things have been obtained!</i>

Note that the non-imperative form of bimorphous verbs is used with *bia*.

4.8.4 Negation

For the simple past and present tenses negation is achieved by placing *aki* (or *akii*) *not*, before the verb:

I aki taetae.	<i>I didn't talk.</i>	Ti aki ngare.	<i>We didn't laugh.</i>
Ko aki nako.	<i>You didn't go.</i>	A aki matuu.	<i>They didn't sleep.</i>

with the same forms serving for present tense if context requires. In the progressive tenses the aki follows the a:

I a aki taetae.	<i>I'm not talking.</i>
Ko a aki nako.	<i>You're not going.</i>
Ti a aki ngare.	<i>We're not laughing.</i>
A a aki matuu.	<i>They're not sleeping.</i>

with the same forms serving for the past progressive tense if context requires. When the forms with tabe or kume are negated the aki precedes them:

I aki tabe n taetae.	<i>I'm not talking.</i>
Ko aki tabe n nako.	<i>You're not going.</i>
Ti aki kume ni ngare.	<i>We're not laughing.</i>
A aki kume ni matuu.	<i>They're not sleeping.</i>

As before the same forms serve the past progressive tense provided context requires. In the future tense the aki follows the na:

Ti na aki matuu.	<i>We're not going to sleep.</i>
E na aki taetae.	<i>He's not going to talk.</i>

The possible interpretation of these utterances with an imperative meaning has been discussed in section 4.8.3.

In the perfect tenses the negation of a tia n is tuai n, or the more emphatic tuai men:

I tuai n taetae.	<i>I haven't talked yet.</i>
I tuai men taetae.	<i>I haven't talked yet.</i>
Kam tuai n tebotebo.	<i>You haven't bathed yet.</i>
Kam tuai men tebotebo.	<i>You haven't bathed yet.</i>

Double negatives are understood, but rarely used:

Ko konaa n roko.	<i>You can come.</i>
Ko aki konaa n roko.	<i>You can't come.</i>
Ko konaa n aki roko.	<i>You can stay away. (Lit. You can desist from coming.)</i>
Ko aki konaa n aki roko.	<i>You must come. (Lit. You cannot desist from coming.)</i>

The meanings of some negative utterances are unpredictable by logic, and this may raise the question of whether it is more fruitful to describe how Kiribatese is actually used or how Kiribatese *should* be used. (Of course, we are here attempting the former.) The word *riai must, should* is not considered to be negated by aki according to most Kiribatese speakers. Consider the following examples:

Ko riai n nako.	<i>You should go.</i>
Ko riai n aki nako.	<i>You shouldn't go.</i>
Ko aki riai n nako.	<i>You shouldn't go.</i>

The phenomenon may be similar to the distinction between English 'can't' and 'shouldn't'. The 'not' in 'should not' negates not 'should' but the following word, while the 'not' in 'cannot' negates the 'can'. Thus, 'you can't go' is the negative of 'you can go', but 'you shouldn't go' is not the negative of 'you should go'. The negative of 'you should go' is actually something like 'you don't have to go'. The negative of Ko riai n nako can be similar circumlocution, such as Ko aoriko n aki nako (literally *It's alright if you don't go*).

4.8.5 Interrogative verbs

A very small number of verbs, including both transitives and intransitives, are interrogative. All verbs can be used in interrogative sentences provided intonation or an interrogative word indicates a question, but the interrogative verbs being discussed here can never be used except to ask questions and to construct certain utterances (see below). The following are apparently the only such interrogative verbs:

iraana (v.t.)	<i>to do what to it; to do what with it</i>
ngaa (v.i.)	<i>to be where</i>
rikea (v.i.)	<i>to pass through where</i>
kangaa (v.i.)	<i>to be like what; to say what; how</i>
uara (v.i.)	<i>to be how</i>
aera (v.i.)	<i>to do what</i>
nakea (v.i.)	<i>to go where</i>

It is noted that three of the above seem to be constructed with the interrogative particle *ra*, while two of the above contain the particle *ke* and two contain *ngaa*, suggesting that these latter two particles may once have had an interrogative function. Examples of usage:

E ngaa?

Where is it?

Ko na rikea?

Which route will you take?

Ti na iraanna?

What are we going to do with it?

E na iraanai?

What is he going to do to me?

Ko kangaa?

What did you say?

Ti na kangaa?

What shall we say?; What shall we do?

A kangaa waa akekei?

What are those canoes like?

Ko uara?

How are you?

A uara kaamta aikai?

How are these carpenters? (referring to health or in general)

Kam aera?

What are you doing?

A aera naakekei?

What are those people doing?

E nakea?

Where did he go?

Ti na nakea?

Where shall we go?

The verb *ngaa* is seldom used with persons other than the third:

A ngaa booki akanne?

Where are the books?

Ti mena iia?

Where are we?

Kam mena iia?

Where are you?

The use of kangaa, as the above examples suggest, is very idiomatic, and the correct interpretation of phrases using it is difficult to reduce to a simple set of rules.

These interrogative verbs are also used to form utterances such as the following:

I aki ataia b'a e na aera.

I don't know what he's going to do.

Ti tuai n tuangaki b'a ti ria i n rikea.

We haven't yet been told which way we should go.

Ko aki uringnga b'a e kangaa.

You don't remember what he said.

A aki tuangiira b'a e ngaa.

They didn't tell us where it is.

Kam tuai ni kaotia b'a ti na iraanna.

You haven't indicated what we should do with it.

Ti a m'aninga b'a ko uara.

We've forgotten how you are.

A titirakiniira b'a e nakea.

They asked us where he went.

or, as in the following:

Tuangai b'a e ngaa!

Tell me where it is!

Kaotia b'a a rikea!

Indicate which way they went!

Titirakinna b'a e na iraanna!

Ask him what he is going to do with it!

Tuangai b'a N na kangaa!

Tell me what to say!

I ataia b'a e ngaa.

I know where it is.

A tuangiira b'a e rujea.

They told us which way he went.

Kam ataia b'a ti na iraanna.

You know what we're going to do with it.

I uringnga b'a e kangaa.

I remember what he said.

In all the above examples, note the somewhat unexpected use of the word *b'a* *that* (conjunction), and use of the object-not-indicated forms of verbs meaning *to know*, *to remember*, *to tell*, *to ask*, etc. These phenomena have been discussed in section 4.4.6.

4.8.6 Transitive verbs

The formation of tenses, negation, formation of imperatives, etc., is exactly the same as for intransitive verbs as discussed in foregoing sections. Transitives exhibit the only true inflection in Kiribatese, and the various transitive suffixes depend on the verb's object, rather than subject, in contrast to many European languages. The various inflected forms are summarised in the table of transitive verb conjugations of Appendix A1. The transitives are divided into eleven groups depending on the way their inflected forms are constructed. Most transitive verbs can be classed as belonging to one of these eleven groups or conjugations.

Some of the groups differ from one another only in one form, or only in a slight way such as lengthening of a vowel. The classification scheme of Table I is to aid one in finding the proper form of transitive verbs, and is not in any way intended as a logical or linguistic classification. It is probable that a little study of how the various forms are constructed might allow one to present the same information more concisely, in terms of a few simple rules or concepts.

It is impossible to claim that every speaker of Kiribatese follows the rules of Table I. It is, however, believed that the table reflects the predominant current usage. The similar table of Sabatier (1952) was a considerable help in constructing this table, which has been simplified and modified in a minor way to reflect what we believe is current usage and to reject some very uncommon forms. Further study will undoubtedly reveal how this table can be condensed or simplified by pointing out certain transformation rules.

4.8.6.1 The base form

In Appendix A1 the form listed under 'base' occurs integrally in each of the verb's forms, and an attempt has been made to select each base in order to minimize the number of groups (conjugations) needed. The base so defined is not used by itself, and may have no linguistic significance. In each of the forms given the first entry is the suffix that must be added to the base in order to obtain the required form. When tripled vowels occur they are always reduced to doubled vowels, as there are only two degrees of vowel length.

4.8.6.2 The infinitive (third person singular object expressed)

The form listed under 'object expressed' is called the infinitive here for convenience. It is the form that would be listed in dictionaries, for example. It is not implied that this form would be translated as an English infinitive in all cases.

Examples:

kab'akaa te kai	<i>to drop a stick</i>
uaatia te kunnikai	<i>to wash clothing</i>
noora te kaibuke	<i>to see a ship</i> etc.

(The form *uaatia* can be used interchangeably with *uaatiia*.) As all of the forms (except possibly the passive) can be used to express the imperative, the above examples could have been rendered

Kab'akaa te kai!	<i>Drop the stick!</i>
Uaatia te kunnikai!	<i>Wash the clothing!</i>
Noora te kaibuke!	<i>See the ship!</i>

as well as in the ordinary indicative mood, provided subject pronouns are used. Here, the tense structure is observed as with the intransitives previously discussed:

Ti kab'akaa te kai.	<i>We dropped the stick.</i>
Ko uaatia te kunnikai.	<i>You washed the clothing.</i>
A noora te kaibuke.	<i>They saw a ship.</i>

Or, if context suggests, the above could be rendered into the present tense. This object-expressed form requires that an object be stated explicitly. It is as though the suffix contains no object pronoun. This form always ends in *a*.

This object-expressed form can be nominalised as an inalienable noun, as can the passive form, by adding the possessive suffixes or with the possessive indicator *n* to indicate that which happens to someone or something:

kab'akaan te kai	<i>dropping of the stick</i>
uaatian te kunnikai	<i>washing of the clothing</i>
nooran te kaibuke	<i>seeing of a ship</i>
kab'akaau	<i>the knocking down of me</i>
kab'akaakiu	<i>the knocking down of me</i>
uaatiana	<i>the washing of it</i>
uaatiakina	<i>the washing of it</i>
kamateara	<i>the killing of us</i>
kamateakira	<i>the killing of us</i>
katangan te kitaa	<i>the playing of a guitar</i>
katangakin te kitaa	<i>the playing of a guitar</i>

There is a small number of verbs for which the object-expressed form has a slightly different meaning when used nominally:

noora te auti	<i>to see a house</i>
noorau	<i>a souvenir of me (something to remember me by)</i>
noorakiu	<i>the seeing of me</i>
taraa te aoti	<i>to look at a horse</i>
taraana	<i>its appearance</i>
taraani moana	<i>the appearance of his face</i>
taraan taamnei	<i>the watching of movies; appearance of movies</i>

(The two meanings of the last example need context or circumstance to resolve.)

4.8.6.3 The personal object pronoun suffixes

The verb endings shown in columns from 'first person singular' through 'second person plural' in the table of Appendix A1 are used when the object is not explicitly expressed. It is as though the indicated suffixes contain object pronouns. Examples:

E noorai.	<i>He saw me.</i>
A na kab'akaingkamii.	<i>They will knock you down.</i>
Ko riribaiira.	<i>You hate us.</i>
Karina!	<i>Put it in!</i>
karinna	<i>to put it in</i>

The same endings also serve to denote the reflexive:

N na tebokai	<i>I'm going to bathe (myself).</i>
Tai oroiko!	<i>Don't hit yourself!</i>
Ti na katamaaroiria.	<i>We're going to adorn ourselves.</i>

In the reflexive case the subject pronoun agrees with the verb suffix. When there is such agreement, there is sometimes ambiguity as to whether or not the subject and object both refer to the same person:

A na tiringiia	<i>They're going to kill them; They're going to kill themselves.</i>
E na koroia.	<i>He's going to cut it; He's going to cut himself.</i>
E a tia n nooria.	<i>He's seen it; He's seen himself.</i>

The expressions *i bon irouna*, *i bon irouia*, can make such expressions unambiguously reflexive:

E nooria i bon irouna.	<i>He saw himself.</i>
A na tiringiia i bon irouia.	<i>They'll kill themselves.</i>

4.8.6.4 The third person plural object suffixes

Here the situation is not as simple as implied by the table in Appendix A1, or by the grammars of Bingham (1861) and Cowell (1951). Although it has been said that the third person plural suffixes depend only on whether the object is animate or inanimate, the actual situation is less definite. It seems as though nouns are really considered divided into three classes, as follows:

class H — human	} class A — animate
class N — non-human, animate	
class I — inanimate	

where the classes H and N are disjoint subclasses of A. In this scheme plants are members of class I. There is also an indication that there may be a distinction depending on whether or not the object is explicitly expressed. In addition, it is difficult to get native speakers to agree on either the proper or the actual usage.

The third person plural suffixes appear to be self established only for class H objects. For the others there is considerable variation and uncertainty. Furthermore, the situation appears to depend on the particular verb under consideration. The same uncertainty appears to involve the possessive suffixes as well.

The following table summarises the various suffixes that may be considered acceptable. The possessive noun and preposition suffixes are included with examples for completeness:

Object	noora	orea	nako	i bukin	mata
class H expressed	nooriia	oroia	nakoia nakoiaa	i bukiia	mataia
class H implicit	nooriia	oroia	nakoiaa	i bukiia	mataia
class N expressed	noori noorii nooriia	oro oroia	nakon nakoia nakoiaa	i bukin i bukiia	matan mataia
class N implicit	noori noorii nooriia	oroia	nakoiaa	i bukiia	mataia
class I expressed	noori noorii	oro oroia	nakon	i bukin i bukiia	matan
class I implicit	noori noorii nooriia	oro oroia	nakoia nakoiaa	i bukiia	mataia

(The interchangeability of noori with noorii, and in some cases of nakoia with nakoiaa does not appear to be part of this problem, but is related to the special nature of the particular roots used in this example.) The above table is tentative. This matter needs to be investigated further.

4.8.6.5 Rules for transitive verb suffixation

The verb suffix in active sentences depends on the object. When several objects are involved, the verb suffix depends on the number and person of the first object mentioned, as in the following examples:

A kabooa te biti ma taiani buun.
They bought a knife and some spoons.

E kabooi taiani buun ma te biti.
He bought some spoons and a knife.

Ti nooriko ma teuaarei.
We saw you and that man.

Ti noora teuaarei ma ngkoe.
We saw that man and you.

Ko tiringiia kimoa ma aroka.

You killed rats and plants.

Ko tiringii aroka' ma kimoa.

You killed plants and rats.

(The form tiring could replace tiringii in the last example.)

4.8.6.6 The passive

The passive form is used in a direct and simple way, and follows the same tense pattern as the active forms:

Ti nooraki.

We were seen; We are seen.

Ti na nooraki.

We'll be seen.

Ti a nooraki.

We're being seen; We were being seen.

Ti a tia n nooraki.

We've been seen; We were seen.

Ti na tia n nooraki.

We'll have been seen.

Ti na aki nooraki.

We won't be seen.

The use of agent expressions will be deferred until section 5.4.1.

4.8.7 Formation of transitive verbs

This section considers the ways in which transitive verbs can be made out of other kinds of words.

4.8.7.1 Transitivity with ka-

The prefix ka-, which is perhaps the most productive in the Kiribatese language, can convert intransitive verbs into transitives. These will then typically have a causative meaning. The suffix a is generally added, as it is the universal marker for transitive verbs. Examples:

nako	to go (v.i.)
kanakoa	to make go, to send away (v.t.)
wene	to lie down (v.i.)
kawenea	to lay down (v.t.)
am'arake	to eat (v.i.)
kaam'arakea	to feed (v.t.)
tei	to stand (v.i.)
atea	to stand up; to build (v.t.)

kiba	<i>to fly (v.i.)</i>
kakibaa	<i>to make fly, to launch (v.t.)</i>
buti	<i>to progress; to travel; to go (v.i.)</i>
kabuta	<i>to propel, to drive (v.t.)</i>
rikirake	<i>to grow, to develop (v.i.)</i>
karikirakea	<i>to develop (v.t.)</i>

This process is quite universal and can be used to transitivise almost any intransitive verb in an analogous way. In this and other cases where it is used, the prefix *ka-* can be translated loosely as *make*.

Adjectives are converted into transitive verbs in the same way. The resulting verb has the meaning of 'to make (something) have the quality of the corresponding adjective'. Examples:

uraura	<i>red (adj.)</i>
kaurauraa	<i>to make red (v.t.)</i>
kukurei	<i>happy (adj.)</i>
kakukureia	<i>to make happy (v.t.)</i>
buubura	<i>big (adj.)</i>
kabuuburaa	<i>to enlarge (v.t.)</i>
anaanau	<i>long (adj.)</i>
kaanaanaua	<i>to lengthen (v.t.)</i>
un	<i>angry (adj.)</i>
kauna	<i>to anger (v.t.)</i>
beebete	<i>light in weight (adj.)</i>
kabeebetea	<i>to lighten (v.t.)</i>
in	<i>closed (adj.)</i>
kaina	<i>to close (v.t.)</i>
on	<i>full (adj.)</i>
kaona	<i>to fill (v.t.)</i>
nanokaawaki	<i>sad (adj.)</i>
kananokaawaka	<i>to sadden (v.t.)</i>
bati	<i>many; much; a lot (adj.)</i>
kabatiaa, kabata	<i>to increase; to make a lot of; to get a lot of (v.t.)</i>
ab'aab'aki	<i>big (adj.)</i>
kaab'aab'aka	<i>to enlarge (v.t.)</i>
uti	<i>awake (adj.)</i>
kauta	<i>to awaken (v.t.)</i>
uki	<i>open (adj.)</i>
kauka	<i>to open (v.t.)</i>
toki	<i>finished, ended (adj.)</i>
katoka	<i>to stop (v.t.)</i>

Almost any adjective can be converted into a transitive verb in this way. Note the somewhat irregular formation of the last six examples.

4.8.7.2 Transitivity with -akina

This suffix can be added to an intransitive verb to make a transitive verb with the meaning of performing the indicated action 'toward', 'at', or 'to' its object. Examples:

ngare (v.i.)	<i>to laugh</i>
ngareakina (v.t.)	<i>to laugh at</i>
uiirikiriki (v.i.)	<i>to whisper; to gossip</i>
uiirikirikiakina (v.t.)	<i>to whisper about (someone); to gossip about (someone)</i>
anene (v.i.)	<i>to sing</i>
aneneakina (v.t.)	<i>to sing</i>
kakarabakau (v.i.)	<i>to talk, chatter, have a discussion</i>
kakarabakauakina (v.t.)	<i>to discuss</i>
takaarua (v.i.)	<i>to shout, scream, yell</i>
takaaruaaekina (v.t.)	<i>to shout (something)</i>
kaangai (v.i.)	<i>to do like this</i>
kaangaiakina (v.t.)	<i>to do like this to</i>
kaanganne (v.i.)	<i>to do like that</i>
kaanganneakina (v.t.)	<i>to do like that to</i>

The same suffix converts adjectives into transitive verbs with the meaning of 'to have the indicated characteristic toward, at, or for something'. Examples:

botu (adj.)	<i>bored</i>
botuakina (v.t.)	<i>to be bored with</i>
ngae (adj.)	<i>satiated, satisfied</i>
ngaeakina (v.t.)	<i>to be satiated with</i>
rauu (adj.)	<i>jealous</i>
rauuakina (v.t.)	<i>to be jealous of; to be jealous toward</i>
mataai (adj.)	<i>envious, interested, desirous</i>
mataaiakina (v.t.)	<i>to envy (something)</i>
raoi (adj.)	<i>peaceful, calm</i>
raoiakina (v.t.)	<i>to calm down (someone)</i>

(This last example seems to impart a different meaning than usual.)

nanououa (adj.)	<i>doubtful</i>
nanououaaekina (v.t.)	<i>to doubt (something)</i>
tabe, tabetabe (adj.)	<i>busy</i>
tabekina, tabetabekina (v.t.)	<i>to be busy with (something)</i>
tokabeti (adj.)	<i>proud</i>
tokabetiakina (v.t.)	<i>to be proud of</i>
nanoanga (adj.)	<i>pity, sympathetic</i>
nanoangaaekina (v.t.)	<i>to pity, have sympathy for (someone)</i>
nib'araa (adj.)	<i>wakeful, restless</i>
nib'araaekina (v.t.)	<i>to miss (someone)</i>

It is noted that some of the above examples have an extra e, inserted probably for phonetic reasons. All these -akina verbs are conjugated according to group 7 of the table in Appendix A1.

4.8.7.3 Transitivity with -ra

This suffix is used with some intransitive verbs indicating motion, or some action which results in motion, to form transitive verbs indicating collision with an object. The resulting transitives are conjugated according to group 5 of the table in Appendix A1.

b'aka (v.i.)	<i>to fall</i>
b'akara (v.t.)	<i>to fall onto</i>
E b'akaria te nii.	<i>A coconut tree fell on it.</i>
timtim (v.i.)	<i>to drip</i>
timtimra (v.t.)	<i>to drip onto</i>
E a timtimriira te karau.	<i>Rain is dripping on us.</i>
mm'amm'a (v.i.)	<i>to crumble, flake away</i>
mm'amm'ara (v.t.)	<i>to crumble onto</i>
toka (v.i.)	<i>to climb up</i>
tokara (v.t.)	<i>to board</i>
oki (v.i.)	<i>to return</i>
okira (v.t.)	<i>to return to</i>
kiba (v.i.)	<i>to fly</i>
kibara (v.t.)	<i>to fly into</i>
E kibariko te keeketi.	<i>A dragonfly flew into you.</i>
tebetebe (v.i.)	<i>to splash</i>
tebera (v.t.)	<i>to splash</i>
E teberai te ran.	<i>The water splashed on me.</i>

(This last example illustrates that sometimes the reduplicated form may remain more popular for the intransitive form, the non-reduplicated form for the transitive.)

beka (v.i.)	<i>to defecate</i>
bekara (v.t.)	<i>to defecate upon</i>
E bekara kieu te beru.	<i>A lizard defecated on my mat.</i>

4.8.7.4 Transitivity with -na

This suffix converts nouns into transitive verbs with various meanings.

When the noun denotes a family relationship, the corresponding transitive verb means something like 'to treat (someone) as having that relationship with speaker'. Examples:

nati (n.)	<i>son; daughter</i>
natina (v.t.)	<i>to treat as a son or daughter; to adopt</i>
Ti kan natiniko.	<i>We want you as our child;</i> <i>We want to adopt you</i>
tina (n.)	<i>mother</i>
tinana (v.t.)	<i>to treat as one's mother</i>
I a bon tinana Meere.	<i>I accept Meere as my mother.</i>

When the object is not formally of the indicated relationship to the speaker, the idea is to sort of adopt the person into that relationship. When the object does formally have the indicated relationship, the idea is to be happy to have

him in that relationship. Thus, if a man hates his brother he might tell him

I aki kan tariniko.

I don't want you as my brother.

This suffixation scheme can be used with all such nouns indicating family relationships:

buu (n.)	spouse
buuna (v.t.)	to treat as a spouse
m'aane (n.)	sister; brother
m'aanena (v.t.)	to treat as one's sister (brother)
eiriki (n.)	sister-in-law; brother-in-law
eirikina (v.t.)	to treat as one's sister-in-law (brother-in-law)
tama (n.)	father
tamana (v.t.)	to treat as one's father
tibu (n.)	grandparent; grandchild
tibuna (v.t.)	to treat as one's grandparent (grandchild)
karo (n.)	parent
karona (v.t.)	to treat as one's parent
rao (n.)	friend; companion
raona (v.t.)	to be friends with; to have as a companion
koraki (n.)	family group; relative
korakina (v.t.)	to treat as one's relative
butika (n.)	brother-in-law; sister-in-law
butikana (v.t.)	to treat as one's brother-in-law (sister-in-law)

The suffix -na can be used with substance names to impart a meaning of *to add the substance to something*. Examples:

miriki (n.) *milk*
 mirikina (v.t.) *to add milk to*
 I a tia ni mirikina am koobe.
I've added milk to your coffee.

b'aa (n.) *oil; gasoline; fuel*
 b'aana (v.t.) *to oil; to fuel*
 E tuai ni b'aanaki au kaa.
My car has not yet been fueled.

tioka (n.) *sugar*
 tiokana (v.t.) *to add sugar to*
 E riai n aki tiokanaki te ika anne.
That fish should not be sugared.

taari (n.) *salt*
 taarina (v.t.) *to add salt to*
 Ti na taarinna.
Let's salt it.

This same suffix is used with various other nouns to impart meanings denoting various actions related to the corresponding nouns:

maeka, mamaeka (n.) *to live*
 maekana (v.t.) *to live in (something)*
 E aki maekanaki te auti arei.
That house is unoccupied.

aba (n.) *land*
 abana (v.t.) *to use or hold as one's own land*
 E na aki manga abana ana tabo Itaia.
He will no longer use Itaia's place as his own land.

b'ai (n.) *thing*
 b'aina (v.t.) *to have, keep as one's own*
 Ko na b'aina au aama?
Are you going to keep my hammer?

karaki (n.) *story*
 karakina (v.t.) *to tell*
 Kam tuai ni karakina amii rongorongo nikabane.
You have not yet told your complete story.

moa (n.) *beginning*
 moana (v.t.) *to begin*
 E na moanaki te mm'akuri n ningaabong.
The work will be begun tomorrow.

onimaki (n.) *trust*
 onimakina (v.t.) *to trust*
 A riai n aki onimakiniko.
They shouldn't trust you.

taeka (n.) *word; statement*
 taekina (v.t.) *to tell about (something)*
 E aki tootoki n tataekiniko.
He talks about you all the time.

(Note the irregularity in the formation of the last example.) All the -na transitive verbs are conjugated according to group 7 of the table in Appendix A1.

4.8.7.5 Some processes involved in transitivisation

When the original root form ends in *i*, as in the following,

bati (adj.)	<i>many, much</i>
nakoati (v.i.)	<i>to go toward you</i>
toki (n.)	<i>end, finish</i>
baki (adj.)	<i>hungry</i>
toobibi (n.)	<i>circuit, circumference</i>
bureeti (v.i.)	<i>to publish</i>

the addition of a suffix *a* can cause a slight difficulty, probably because the suffix *-ia* is usually reserved for the third person singular form with object implicit. The problem seems to be resolved in one of three ways.

(1) The *i* is dropped as in the following examples:

toki (n.)	<i>end, finish</i>
katoka (v.t.)	<i>to end, to finish</i>

ngeri (n.)	<i>curly</i>
kangera(v.t.)	<i>to curl</i>
bati (adj.)	<i>much, many</i>
kabata (v.t.)	<i>to increase; to load on a lot</i>

(2) The *i* is retained but then there is no distinction between the third person object expressed an object implicit forms, as in the following examples:

nakoati (v.i.)	<i>to go toward you</i>
kanakoatia (v.t.)	<i>to send (something) to you</i>
kanakoatia (v.t.)	<i>to send it to you</i>
toobibi (n.)	<i>circuit, circumference</i>
katoobibia (v.t.)	<i>to go around (something)</i>
katoobibia (v.t.)	<i>to go around it</i>
bureeti (v.i.)	<i>to publish</i>
bureetia (v.t.)	<i>to publish (something)</i>
bureetia (v.t.)	<i>to publish it</i>

(The first transliterations of the English *to publish* (v.i.) were *booreti*, used by the Protestant printery, and *bwereeti*, used by the Catholic printery. This inconsistency was resolved by the KLB, which adopted the compromise as indicated.)

(3) A defective verb results, which has no object expressed form, as in the following examples:

baki (adj.)	<i>hungry</i>
kabakia (v.t.)	<i>to make him hungry</i>
karewati (v.i.)	<i>to throw toward you</i>
karewatia (v.t.)	<i>to throw it toward you</i>

In cases where such defective transitive verbs would otherwise be used, circumlocutions are necessary. For example, to say *It made Itaia hungry.*, one might use *E baki iai Itaia Itaia was hungry thereby.* To say *He threw a coconut to you*, one might use *E kareiko n te ben He threw a coconut to you* (instead of using a verb based on the root *karewati*).

4.9 Adverbs

The simple adverbs have the three degrees of proximity (or time) that are analogous to the three persons of grammar. The first degree means 'now' or 'near the speaker'; the second degree means 'later' or 'near you'; and the third degree means 'in the past' or 'far from both of us'. The following table summarises this pattern:

	Relative (Time)	Demonstrative (Time)	(Place)
1.	ngkai, ngkae	ngkai	ikai
2.	ngkana	ngkanne	ikanne
3.	ngke	ngkekei	ikekei

where the corresponding meanings are approximately:

	Relative	Demonstrative	
	(Time)	(Time)	(Place)
1.	<i>now that</i>	<i>now</i>	<i>here</i>
2.	<i>when (future); if</i>	<i>then (later)</i>	<i>there (near you)</i>
3.	<i>when (past); if</i>	<i>then (past)</i>	<i>there (far from us)</i>

There is another relative locative adverb, *ike*, which does not seem to fit into the above scheme. Cowell (1951) makes the interesting suggestion that *ike where* may have once been the third degree counterpart of such a scheme, from which the corresponding first and second degree forms (possibly *ikae* and *ika*) have been dropped. For the first degree relative time adverb, apparently *ngkai* and *ngkae* can be used interchangeably. Its second and third degrees, *ngkana* and *ngke*, which both can mean *if*, differ in the following respect. If the truth of the 'if' clause is not known, *ngkana* is used, if the 'if' clause is known to be contrary to fact, *ngke* is used:

<i>ngkana e roko</i>	<i>if he comes</i>
<i>ngke ti kaum'ane</i>	<i>if we were rich</i>

The following examples illustrate the use of these adverbs;

<i>I mena ikai.</i>	<i>I am here.</i>
<i>E na nako ikekei.</i>	<i>He will go there.</i>
<i>A tekateka ikanne.</i>	<i>They sat there (near you).</i>
<i>Ti na nako ngkai</i>	<i>Let's go now.</i>
<i>ao ngkanne kam na irai.</i>	<i>and then you will go with me.</i>
<i>A kukurei ngkekei.</i>	<i>They were happy then.</i>
<i>ngkai e roko</i>	<i>now that he has come</i>
<i>ngkae e roko</i>	<i>now that he has come</i>
<i>ngkana kam nooria</i>	<i>when you see it; if you see it</i>
<i>ngke ti nako Tarawa</i>	<i>when we went to Tarawa: If we had gone to Tarawa</i>
<i>ngke ko wanawana</i>	<i>if you were smart</i>
<i>te tabo ike ko mena iai</i>	<i>the place where you are</i>
<i>te auti ike a matuu iai</i>	<i>the house where they slept</i>

The modern tendency is to replace *ike* by the corresponding relative pronoun appropriate for the given case:

<i>te tabo ane ko mena iai</i>	<i>the place where you are</i>
<i>te auti are a matuu iai</i>	<i>the house where they slept</i>

4.9.1 Time adverbs

These will be divided into three groups. The first group consists of those used syntactically as adverbs, with similar function as in English. The following are commonly used members of this group:

<i>ngkai</i>	<i>now</i>
<i>ngkanne</i>	<i>then (later)</i>
<i>ngkekei</i>	<i>then (some time ago)</i>
<i>ngkoanaoa</i>	<i>yesterday</i>
<i>ningngabong, ningngaabong</i>	<i>tomorrow</i>
<i>ngkoa</i>	<i>some time ago</i>
<i>ngkoangkoa</i>	<i>a long time ago</i>

rimoa	<i>formerly</i>
rimwii	<i>later, afterwards</i>
i mwiina	<i>afterwards</i>
ngkerimoa	<i>formerly</i>
ngkainaba	<i>immediately, at once, right now</i>
ngkannenaba	<i>at the very time mentioned</i>
ngkekeinaba	<i>at that very time</i>

They are usually placed just after the explicit subject, where present, but can also be placed otherwise. If placed at the beginning of the sentence it is often followed by the word *ao*. Examples:

N na roko rimwii.

I'll come later.

A a tia n nako ngkai.

They have now gone.

E kana te ika teuaaei ngkoananoa.

This man ate fish yesterday.

I mwiina ao ti na am'arake.

We'll eat afterwards.

Ti rangi ni kainnanao ngkekei.

We were very poor then.

Ngkaa te m'ane ngkainaba.

Give me the money right now.

The second group function syntactically as auxiliary verbs. The following is a list of common examples:

a tib'a (tia n)	<i>just</i>
nangi tib'a (tia n)	<i>just</i>
kaman	<i>a long time ago</i>
kaan, kan	<i>almost (present or future)</i>
kuri	<i>almost (past)</i>
manga	<i>again</i>

(The expressions in parenthesis in the left column are optional.) Examples of use:

A a tib'a roko taan akawa.

The fishermen have just come.

I a kaman am'arake.

I ate a long time ago.

Kam na manga okira Tarawa?

Are you going to return again to Tarawa?

E kuri ni b'aka Itaia.

Itaia almost fell.

E kaani b'aka.

It's almost falling; It's about to fall

Ti a kani kiitanaki n te b'ati.

We're almost missing the bus.

The third group function syntactically as verbs, and there are very few such examples:

maan (v.i.)	to be (somewhere) a long time
waekoa (v.i.)	to do (something) fast
kiriaria (v.i.)	to take a long time

Examples of use:

Ko maan i Amerika?

Were you in America a long time?

N na waekoa.

I'll be fast (about it).

E kiriaria rokon te tia reirei.

The teacher won't be here for a long time.

(lit. The arrival of the teacher will take a long time.)

The distinction between the last two groups is not sharp, as on occasion some of either group can be used with or without a main verb:

E kaman.

(That happened) a long time ago.

Ti riai ni waekoa ni mm'akuri.

We should work fast.

E kiriaria n roko te tia reirei.

The teacher won't be here for a long time.

(lit. The teacher will take a long time to come.)

There are many adverbial expressions of time. Many of these are introduced by *n*, and have the same position in the sentence as simple adverbs. One is free to construct a great variety of such adverbial expressions, of which the following examples are typical:

n taai aika a bati	often (lit. at many times)
n taai aika a karako	seldom
n taai nako	always
n aki toki	always
n te tai ae e riai	at the appropriate time
n tabetai	sometimes
n taai tabetai	sometimes
ni waekoa	soon
ni burenib'ai	seldom
n tain te buaka	during wartime
i mwiin te rongo	after the drought
i m'aa'in token te ririki	before the end of the year
ni katoatai	always

The following examples illustrate usage:

E roko n tain te buaka ao e tiku ikai ni karoakoa token te nam'akaina are Beberuari.

He came during the war and he stayed here until the end of February.

Iai te tioka n te titooa n tabetai, ma burenib'ai n iai te biia.

There is sometimes sugar in the store, but there is beer only seldom.

E na taataningaroti n aki toki ara tia mm'akuri.

Our worker will always be lazy.

E kamateaki n te tai naba anne.

He was killed at that very time.

4.9.2 Locative and other adverbs

The following are some of the more common single-word adverbs:

ikai	<i>here</i>
ikanne	<i>there (near you)</i>
ikekei	<i>there (far away)</i>
tii	<i>only</i>
kai, kakai	<i>easily</i>
ni kaineti	<i>directly</i>

Their syntactic properties are different. The words *tii*, *kai* and *kakai* are used somewhat like auxiliary verbs:

E kakai reke te ika ikai.
Fish are easily caught here.

N na tii am'arake.
I'm just going to eat; I'm only going to eat.

A few adverbial expressions are constructed with *n* plus an adjective:

E roko n ataei.
She was a virgin. (lit. she came (to me) as a child.)

E m'are ni kara ma Itaia.
She wasn't a virgin when she married Itaia. (lit. she married Itaia as an old woman.)

Adverbial expressions can be formed with *n te aro ae* + (adjective). Examples:

E tamaaroa b'a ko na am'arake n te aro ae e riai.
It would be nice if you would eat courteously.

Kam riai n taetae n te aro ae e eti.
You should speak correctly.

A very productive method of forming adverbial expressions of manner is with *n te aro ae in ... a manner*. The usual pattern is

n te aro ae + (sentence) + *iai*

Examples:

Tai katabetabea teuaarei n te aro ae e na akea ana tai ni motirawa.
Don't make this man so busy that he won't have any time to rest.

Tekateka n te aro ae ti na aki rib'a iroum.
Sit so that we won't be crowded by you.

E koonaki roroana n te aro ae e aki konaa n ikeike iai.
His neck was squeezed in such a manner that he couldn't breathe.

4.9.3 Interrogative adverbs

ningai?	<i>when?</i>
iaa?, iaa?	<i>where?</i>
iaara?	<i>where?</i>

The spelling *ningai* is preferred, although some may consider the correct pronunciation to be *nningai*. This may be because *ningai* is preceded by *n*.

Examples:

E na roko n ningai?	<i>When will he come?</i>
E roko n ningai?	<i>When did he come?</i>
N ningai ae e na roko?	<i>When will he come?</i>
N ningai ae e roko?	<i>When did he come?</i>
E mena iaa?	<i>Where is it?</i>
E mena iaara?	<i>Where is it?</i>

4.10 Conjunctions

A series of nouns can be joined with *ao and*, or with *ma and; with*. Sometimes the particle *ai* is used as an indicator of the last element in the series for emphasis. Examples:

te ika ao te ben
fish and coconuts

te ika ao ai te ben
fish and coconuts too

A na roko Itaia ao Uriam ao Meere.
Itaia, Uriam and Meere are going to come.

Ti na karekea te tioka ao te raiti ao te buraawa.
Let's get sugar, rice and flour.

Verbs and adjectives are usually joined with *man*.

E tikiraoi man rietaata au auti.
My house is beautiful and high.

Ti na uaua man akawa
Let's go swimming and fish.

A oroia mani kab'akaa.
They hit him and knocked him down.

All elements can be linked by *ke or*:

Ko na matuu ke ko na aki?
Are you going to sleep, or aren't you?

Iai te buraawa ke te raiti?
Is there any flour or rice?

4.10.1 Subordinating conjunctions

These are phrases which can connect two sentences in such a way that one becomes subordinate to the other. The usual pattern is

(main sentence) + (subordinating conjunction) + (subordinate sentence).

The following is a list of some of the common subordinating conjunction phrases in Kiribatese:

b'a	<i>that</i>
e (boni) ngae ngke	<i>although, even though</i>
e (boni) ngae ngkana	<i>although, even though</i>

bukina b'a	<i>because, since, as</i>
b'a bukina ngke	<i>because, since, as</i>
kioina b'a	<i>because, since, as</i>
b'a kioina ngke	<i>because, since, as</i>
ngke	<i>when (past); if</i>
ngkae, ngkai	<i>now that, since, as</i>
ngkana	<i>if; when (future)</i>
n te aro ae	<i>so that, in such a way that</i>
ni karokoa	<i>until</i>
tii ngkana	<i>only if</i>
ma tii ngkana	<i>unless</i>
(b'a) e aonga n	<i>so that</i>
ma ngaia ae	<i>therefore</i>
ma ngaia are	<i>therefore</i>

Examples:

Tuanga Meere b'a e na roko.
Tell Meere to come.

(See section 4.4.6 for more examples using b'a.)

E ngae ngke akea kantokana ao e bon tokara naba te raanti.
He boarded the launch even though he didn't have the fare.

Tai nako ma tii ngkana ko weteaki.
Don't go unless you're called.

E boni ngae ngkana e aki kukurei iai tinau ao ti na bon nako naba.
We're going to go even though my mother isn't happy about it.

Ti katikua iroun tinana b'a bukina ngke e aki marurung n nakonako.
We left him with his mother because he wasn't well enough to walk.

(The expressions b'a bukina ngke and bukina b'a can be used interchangeably.)

Kam tangoa te m'ane kioina b'a e aki tau amii m'ane n tantanii?
Did you borrow the money because your savings were inadequate?

(The expressions kioina b'a and b'a kioina ngke can be used interchangeably also.)

Ti nooria ngke e otinako.
We saw him when he came out.

Ti konaa n rooroko iroumii ngkai iai ara rebwerebwe.
We can come visit you often now that we have a motorbike.

A na maiu arokara ngkana e b'aab'aka te karau.
Our plants will grow well if (when) it starts raining.

Ti na kawenea te waa n te aro ae e na tani man te riringa.
Let's lay the canoe down so that it will be sheltered from the sun.

A itangitangiriia ni karokoa a mate.
They loved each other until they died.

A na kabooa te kaa tii ngkana e reke te m'ane mairoun tamaia.
They'll buy the car only if they get money from their father.

A na aki kabooa te kaa ma tii ngkana e reke te m'ane mairoun tamaia.
They won't buy the car unless they get money from their father.

Ko na bon oreaki b'a ko aonga n uringa au taeka.
You're going to get hit so that you'll remember my words.

Kiribatese uses such subordinate clause constructions sparingly. Prepositional phrases, such as the following, are commonly used instead:

Ti na kabooa te kaa i mwiin reken te m'ane iroura.
We'll buy the car after we get the money.
 (Lit. *We'll buy the car after the acquisition of the money by us.*)

E tamaaroa b'a ti na kaitiaka te auti i m'aain rokoia.
We'd better clean up the house before they come.
 (Lit. *We'd better clean up the house before their arrival.*)

4.11 Reduplication

This phenomenon is common in Kiribatese and many other Malayo-Polynesian languages, and it refers to the repetition of an entire word or part of a word to impart a modification of meaning.

Certain nouns can be reduplicated in entirety to form adjectives with the meaning of 'abounding in the things denoted by the corresponding noun'.

Examples:

ino (n.)	<i>maggot</i>
inoino (adj.)	<i>infested with maggots</i>
man (n.)	<i>animal; insect</i>
maniman (adj.)	<i>infested with animals (bugs)</i>
ran (n.)	<i>water</i>
ranran (adj.)	<i>watery, dilute</i>
ika (n.)	<i>fish</i>
ikaika (adj.)	<i>abounding in fish</i>
E ikaika te nama.	<i>The lagoon has many fish</i>
b'aa (n.)	<i>oil</i>
b'aab'aa (adj.)	<i>oily</i>
E b'aab'aa kunim.	<i>Your skin is oily.</i>
ina (n.)	<i>scale (of fish, etc.)</i>
inaina (adj.)	<i>scaly</i>
nii (n.)	<i>coconut tree</i>
niinii (adj.)	<i>abounding in coconut trees</i>

For certain longer nouns the same effect is achieved by reduplicating part of the noun:

maunga (n.)	<i>mountain</i>
maungaunga (adj.)	<i>mountainous</i>
burae (n.)	<i>hair</i>
buraerae (adj.)	<i>hairly</i>
tano (n.)	<i>sand; soil</i>
tantano, tanotano (adj.)	<i>sandy</i>
A tantano waem.	<i>Your feet are full of sand.</i>

Some nouns consist of reduplicated elements which are rarely if at all used alone. It is possible that the original meaning of such reduplicated elements has been lost, modified, or fallen from popularity. Examples:

bokaboka	<i>mud</i>
uteute	<i>grass</i>
bwebwe	<i>butterfly</i>
riburibu	<i>mud</i>

Some words are reduplicated to form a kind of baby talk, used with talking to small children:

kii	<i>anus; crotch</i>
kiikii	<i>anus (baby talk)</i>
bero	<i>penis</i>
berobero	<i>penis (baby talk)</i>

4.11.1 Formation of continuous aspect

Verbs have a *continuous aspect* (see section 4.8.2.5) which denotes action continuously, habitually, customarily or intermittently carried out. This aspect is formed by the reduplication of part of the word used for the corresponding *simple aspect*. When the intransitive or root form of the simple aspect begins with a consonant or nasal, has two syllables or less and contains no long sounds or diphthongs the continuous aspect is formed by reduplicating the first syllable and lengthening its vowel the first time. Examples:

Simple Aspect	Continuous Aspect	
wene (v.i.)	weewene	<i>to lie, recline</i>
ngare (v.i.)	ngaangare	<i>to laugh</i>
tang (v.i.)	taatang	<i>to cry</i>
mim (v.i.)	miimim	<i>to urinate</i>
beka (v.i.)	beebeka	<i>to defecate</i>
roko (v.i.)	rooroko	<i>to come, arrive</i>
ngongo (v.i.)	ngoongongo	<i>to itch</i>
kare (v.i.)	kaakare	<i>to throw (things)</i>
biri (v.i.)	biibiri	<i>to run</i>
kiba (v.i.)	kiikiba	<i>to fly</i>
kiro (v.i.)	kiikiro	<i>to faint</i>
nima (v.t.)	niinima	<i>to drink</i>
kana (v.t.)	kaakana	<i>to eat</i>
rinea (v.t.)	riirinea	<i>to choose</i>
nako (v.i.)	naanako	<i>to go</i>
toro (v.i.)	tootoro	<i>to squat</i>
tiku (v.i.)	tiitiku	<i>to remain</i>

Some verbs not belonging to this class nevertheless form their continuous aspects in the same way:

Simple Aspect	Continuous Aspect	
m'aninga (v.i.)	m'aam'aninga	<i>to forget</i>
tangira (v.t.)	taatangira	<i>to want (if simple); to like (if continuous)</i>
keewati (v.i.)	keekeewati	<i>to withdraw</i>

Simple Aspect	Continuous Aspect	
keerikaaki (v.i.)	keekeerikaaki	<i>to move back</i>
waerake (v.i.)	waawaerake	<i>to go east</i>
tam'arake (v.i.)	taatam'arake	<i>to climb</i>
kamatea (v.t.)	kaakamatea	<i>to kill</i>
karinea (v.t.)	kaakarinea	<i>to honour</i>
tauti (v.i.)	taatauti	<i>to be stingy</i>
buee (v.i.)	buubuee	<i>to be hot</i>
wairio (v.i.)	waawairio	<i>to go west</i>

Verbs not belonging to this class form their continuous aspects in various other ways:

Simple Aspect	Continuous Aspect	
b'aatika (v.i.)	b'ab'aatika	<i>to ride a bicycle</i>
raaun (v.i.)	raraaun	<i>to ride around</i>
boiraa (adj.)	boboiraa	<i>to smell bad</i>
boiarara (adj.)	boboiarara	<i>to smell good</i>
orea (v.t.)	oroorea	<i>to hit</i>
moamoa (adj.)	momoamoa	<i>to be generous</i>
kiitatauti (adj.)	kikiitatauti	<i>to be stingy</i>
m'aitoro (adj.)	m'am'aitoro	<i>to be cold</i>
uti (v.i.)	utuuti	<i>to awaken</i>
ongo (v.i.)	ongoongo	<i>to hear</i>
tebotebo (v.i.)	tetebotebo or teetebotebo	<i>to bathe</i>
takaakaro (v.i.)	tatakaakaro or taatakaakaro	<i>to play</i>
iangoo (v.i.)	iaiangoo	<i>to think</i>
iangoo (v.t.)	iaiangoo	<i>to think about</i>
uringa (v.t.)	uruuringa	<i>to remember</i>
anene (v.i.)	aneenene	<i>to sing</i>
takaarua (v.i.)	tatakaarua	<i>to shout</i>
koroboki (v.i.)	kookoroboki or kokoroboki	<i>to write</i>
am'arake (v.i.)	am'aam'arake	<i>to eat</i>
mooi (v.i.)	momooi	<i>to drink</i>
tekateka (v.i.)	tetekateka	<i>to sit</i>
matuu (v.i.)	mamatuu or maamatuu	<i>to sleep</i>
kiree (v.i.)	kikiree or kiikiree	<i>to flirt</i>

It is recalled that most adjective-like intransitive verbs have a reduplicated element, and thus usually correspond to the continuous aspect. There is often no corresponding simple aspect.

5. SYNTAX OF SIMPLE SENTENCES

Just as in other languages, Kiribatese has utterances which express a more-or-less complete thought, and these are begun with a capital letter and ended with a period in written text.

5.1 Equational sentences

The basic form of equational sentences is

(nominal expression) + (nominal expression)

There is almost complete symmetry between the two elements. Examples:

Te beretitenti ngaia.	<i>He is the president.</i>
Ngaia te beretitenti.	<i>He is the president.</i>
Te tia tebo ngkoe.	<i>You are a diver.</i>
Ngkoe te tia tebo.	<i>You are a diver.</i>
Ara tia mm'akuri teuaarei.	<i>That man is our worker.</i>
Teuaarei ara tia mm'akuri.	<i>That man is our worker.</i>
Kaamta roronga akekei.	<i>Those young men are carpenters.</i>
Roronga akekei kaamta.	<i>Those young men are carpenters.</i>

The particle *bon* can be used to give more emphasis to the nominal expression following it, as well as to make otherwise cumbersome sentences more understandable. The following replies would be used to answer the question "Who is the president?":

Te beretitenti boni ngaia.	<i><u>He</u> is the president.</i>
Boni ngaia te beretitenti.	<i><u>He</u> is the president.</i>

whereas the following would answer the question "What is he?":

Ngaia bon te beretitenti.	<i>He is the <u>president</u>.</i>
Bon te beretitenti ngaia.	<i>He is the <u>president</u>.</i>

An utterance consisting of a single nominal expression could be interpreted as an equational sentence:

Te nii.	<i>A coconut tree; It's a coconut tree.</i>
Ngaia.	<i>He; It is he.</i>
Am kao.	<i>Your ox; It was your ox.</i>

Or, with *bon*:

Bon arokara.	<i>They are our plants.</i>
Bon aia bure.	<i>It was their fault.</i>
Bon te waa.	<i>It was a canoe.</i>

Sometimes this construction is used to form sentences which in English would have a completely different structure:

Au kaantaninga b'a ko na waekoa n roko.	<i>I hope that you will come soon.</i>
(lit. <i>It is my hope that you will come soon.</i>)	
Aia baaire taani moti b'a e na kabureaki teuaaei inanon teniua te ririki.	<i>The judges decided that he would be sentenced to three years.</i>
(lit. <i>It was the judges decision that he would be sentenced to three years.</i>)	

Am taeka ngkoa b'a ko na anganai te m'ane ngkai.
You said that you would give me the money now.
 (lit. *It was your word that you would give me the money now.*)

Au kaantaninga b'a ko na kawaria.
I hope that you will go see him.
 (lit. *It is my hope that you will go see him.*)

Aia baaire naakekei b'a e na kateaki ara auti ikai.
Those people decided that our house would be built here.
 (lit. *It was the decision of those people that our house would be built here.*)

Am taeka ngkoa b'a ko na roko i m'aain te aoa teuana.
You said that you would come before one o'clock.
 (lit. *It was your word that you would come before one o'clock.*)

5.1.1 Negative equational sentences

To negativise an equational sentence, tiaki is placed before the element negated. Thus, tiaki sort of replaces bon, giving it a negative sense:

Ngaia tiaki te beretitenti.	<i>He is not the president.</i>
Tiaki te beretitenti ngaia.	<i>He is not the president.</i>
Tiaki ngaia te beretitenti.	<i>The president is not he.</i>
Te beretitenti tiaki ngaia.	<i>The president is not he.</i>

Or, with added emphasis:

Ngaia bon tiaki te beretitenti.	<i>He is not the president.</i>
Bon tiaki te beretitenti ngaia.	<i>He is not the president.</i>
Bon tiaki ngaia te beretitenti.	<i>The president is not he.</i>
Te beretitenti bon tiaki ngaia.	<i>The president is not he.</i>

Also, with just one nominal expression:

Tiaki au bure.	<i>It wasn't my fault.</i>
Bon tiaki au bure.	<i>It was definitely not my fault.</i>
Tiaki ngkoe.	<i>It wasn't you.</i>
Tiaki taamneira.	<i>It's not a picture of us.</i>

5.1.2 Tense indication in equational sentences

The foregoing description of equational sentences illustrates the direct manner of formation, which indicates either present or past. As in other types of sentences, Kiribatese does not emphasise the difference between present and past, which can usually be inferred from context. Other indicators are purposefully inserted to emphasise present or past when necessary:

Boni ngaia te beretitenti rimoa.	<i>He was the president (before).</i>
Boni ngaia te beretitenti ngkai.	<i>He is the president (now).</i>

To form the future tense there are two common types of utterance that are used. One makes use of the flexibility of function of words and essentially considers the noun as a verb. Names of occupations, for example, when used as verbs mean 'to act in such an occupation'. Examples:

beretitenti (n.)	<i>president</i>
beretitenti (v.i.)	<i>to serve as president</i>
kaamta (n.)	<i>carpenter</i>
kaamta (v.i.)	<i>to work as a carpenter</i>
tia reirei (n.)	<i>teacher</i>
tia reirei (v.i.)	<i>to act as a teacher</i>

Thus, the future can be constructed as in any intransitive sentence (see section 5.3.):

E na beretitenti Terurungaa.	<i>Terurungaa will be the president.</i>
A na taan tia reirei naakai.	<i>These people will be teachers.</i>
N na tia moti.	<i>I shall be the judge.</i>

The other common way uses the circumlocution *riki b'a to become*:

E na riki Terurungaa b'a te beretitenti.	<i>Terurungaa will be the president.</i>
A na riki b'a taan tia reirei naakai.	<i>These people will be teachers.</i>
N na riki b'a te tia moti.	<i>I shall be the judge.</i>
E na riki Kiribati b'a te aba ae e inaaomata.	<i>Kiribati will become an independent country.</i>
A na riki auti aikai b'a mweengaia.	<i>These houses will be their home.</i>

These same two methods can be used to form all the other tenses:

I tuai ni kaamta.	<i>I've never been a carpenter.</i>
E a tia n riki Itaia b'a temanna ae e moan te kakannato i aoni Kiribati.	<i>Itaia has become one of the most important persons in Kiribati.</i>

5.2 Descriptive sentences

The simplest descriptive sentences consist of

(subject pronoun) + (adjective)

as in the following examples:

E tikiraoi.	<i>She (he, it) is pretty.</i>
Ti b'atab'ata.	<i>We are dark (skinned).</i>
Kam baba.	<i>You are stupid.</i>

The negative is formed by inserting *aki* (or *akii*) before the adjective:

E aki tikiraoi.	<i>She is not pretty.</i>
Ti aki b'atab'ata.	<i>We are not dark.</i>
Kam aki baba.	<i>You are not stupid.</i>

The addition of the particle *a* indicates a transitory state or a condition that might be different in past or future times:

E a kabuebue.	<i>It is hot (at the moment).</i>
Ti a baki.	<i>We are hungry.</i>
Ko a aoraki.	<i>You are sick.</i>
E a kara.	<i>He is old.</i>
A a mate.	<i>They are dead.</i>

some negative examples:

Ko a aki nanokaawaki.	<i>You are not sad.</i>
I a aki wanawana.	<i>I am not intelligent (this time).</i>
A a aki raraoi.	<i>They are not good.</i>

The future tense is formed regularly, and indicates a transitory state:

E na tikiraoi.	<i>She will be pretty.</i>
Ti na baki.	<i>We'll be hungry.</i>
E na aki kabuebue.	<i>It won't be hot.</i>
E na aki mate.	<i>He won't be dead.</i>
Kam na aki baba.	<i>You won't be stupid.</i>

(With different intonation this last example could mean *Don't be stupid!*)

If the subject is to be expressed (not just by a subject pronoun) the pattern is

(subject pronoun) + (adjective) + (subject)

as in the following examples:

E tikiraoi Nei Teiti.	<i>Nei Teiti is pretty.</i>
Ti b'atab'ata ngaira.	<i>We are dark.</i>
Kam baba ngkamii taan akawa.	<i>You fishermen are stupid.</i>
E aki tikiraoi teuaarei.	<i>That man is not handsome.</i>
A aki b'atab'ata kaaain Tiom'ane.	<i>Germans are not dark.</i>
E a kabuebue te ran.	<i>The water is hot.</i>
Ti a baki ngaira ataei.	<i>We children are hungry.</i>
E a kara te koowana.	<i>The governor is old.</i>
A mate oon akekei.	<i>Those turtles are dead.</i>
E na tikiraoi Meeria.	<i>Meeria will be pretty.</i>
A na baki taani mm'akuri.	<i>The workers will be hungry.</i>
E na aki kabuebue te raiti.	<i>The rice won't be hot.</i>

The other tenses are formed regularly:

Ti tuai meni baki.	<i>We are not hungry yet.</i>
E tuai ni marurung Tioon.	<i>Tioon is not well yet.</i>

But the perfect form (with a *tia n*) is usually not used with adjectives.

5.3 Intransitive sentences

We here consider sentences in which there is no direct object of the action. The pattern is identical to that of descriptive sentences as discussed above, except that the adjective is replaced by the intransitive verb. Examples:

I nakonako.	<i>I walked.</i>
A taratara.	<i>They were awake.</i>
Ti ngare.	<i>We laughed.</i>

Kam tekateka.	<i>You sat down.</i>
Ko mm'akuri.	<i>You worked.</i>
A b'aka.	<i>They fell.</i>
A a tia n roko naakekei.	<i>Those people have come.</i>
Ti a tia n am'arake.	<i>We've eaten.</i>
E na matuu.	<i>He's going to sleep.</i>
A na b'aka been.	<i>The coconuts will fall.</i>
E tuai ni waerake.	<i>He hasn't gone east yet.</i>
A na aki roko taan anene.	<i>The singers are not going to come.</i>
E aki kiba te moa.	<i>The chicken didn't fly.</i>
E a matakua Itaia.	<i>Itaia's watching.</i>

5.4 Singly transitive sentences

We are now considering sentences in which there is one direct object and no indirect object. The basic pattern is

(subject pronoun) + (transitive verb) + (direct object) + (subject)

Either or both the direct object and the subject need not be expressed, but the form of the verb depends on whether or not the direct object is explicitly expressed (see section 4.8.6).

E oroia.
He hit it.

E tenaa Itaia te kirii.
The dog bit Itaia.

A noora te kaibuke naakekei.
Those people saw the ship.

A noora te kaibuke
They saw the ship.

A nooria naakekei.
Those people saw it.

A nooria.
They saw it.

E a tia n anaa te reerio te tia reirei.
The teacher has taken the radio.

E a tia n anaa te reerio.
He has taken the radio.

E a tia n anaia te tia reirei.
The teacher has taken it.

E a tia n anaia.
He has taken it.

E na weteiia taani mm'akuri aia mataniuii.
Their boss will call the workmen.

E na weteiia taani mm'akuri.
He will call the workmen.

E na weteiia aia mataniuii.
Their boss will call them.

E na weteiia.
He will call them.

The verb forms are consistent with the rules described in sections 4.8.2 and 4.8.6.

5.4.1 Passive sentences

Here the usual pattern is

(subject pronoun) + (passive verb) + (subject) + (agent)

where either or both of the last two elements may be omitted. The agent is expressed with iroun *by* or appropriate forms of that word as described in section 4.6).

irouu	<i>by me</i>
iroum	<i>by you</i>
iroun te beretenti	<i>by the president</i>

The following are typical examples of passive sentences:

E nooraki te kirii anne irouia uaaakekei.
That dog was seen by those men.

E nooraki te kirii anne irouia.
That dog was seen by them

E nooraki te kirii anne.
That dog was seen.

E nooraki irouia.
It was seen by them

E nooraki irouia uaaakekei.
It was seen by those men.

E nooraki.
It was seen.

E na oreaki natim iroun te tia reirei.
Your child will be hit by the teacher.

E na oreaki natim irouna.
Your child will be hit by him.

E na oreaki natim.
Your child will be hit.

E na oreaki iroun te tia reirei.
He will be hit by the teacher.

E na oreaki irouna.
He will be hit by him.

E na oreaki.
He will be hit.

The form of the verb is consistent with the rules given in sections 4.8.2 and 4.8.6.5.

5.5 Doubly transitive sentences

Only two verbs in Kiribatese are doubly transitive: *angan* to *give* and *tuanga* to *tell*. There is uncertainty as to the proper structure of *angan* as it seems different from other verbs. It is conjugated irregularly as follows:

<i>angan</i>	object expressed
<i>anganai</i>	first person singular
<i>anganiko</i>	second person singular
<i>anganna</i>	third person singular
<i>anganiira</i>	first person plural
<i>anganingkamii</i>	second person plural
<i>anganiia</i>	third person plural animate
<i>angan</i>	third person plural non-animate
<i>anganaki</i>	passive

The verb *tuanga* is conjugated according to group 8 of table in Appendix A1. When both objects are explicit the first corresponds to what in English would be called the indirect object, and the second the direct object. When objective suffixes are used they correspond to the indirect object. Examples:

E *anganai* te boki
He gave me the book.

I *angan* teuaarei te m'ane.
I gave that man the money.

Ti na *tuangiia* te rongorongo.
We'll tell them the news.

Ti *tuangiia* taan reirei taekan te kaibuke
We told the teachers about the ship.

When both objects and the subject are all explicit the resulting stacking of nouns becomes somewhat cumbersome, but still understandable:

A *angan* tinaia te am'arake ataei akekei.
Those children gave food to their mother.

(but A *anga* te am'arake ataei akekei nakon tinaia is more commonly used.) In the passive voice the indirect object becomes subject, subject becomes agent and direct object just sort of remains, as in following examples:

E *anganaki* te ben iroun te ataei.
He was given a coconut by a child.

Ti *tuangaki* te rongorongo iroun te tia uaereti.
We were told the news by the wireless operator.

A *anganaki* taan reirei te m'ane irouni mataniuiia.
The teachers were given money by their boss.

Other double transitive constructions must be expressed in other ways. The most common is by use of prepositions, particularly *nakon* and its derivatives, to indicate the indirect object:

E *kanakoa* te reta nakoio.
He sent me a letter.

Ti na uota te atama nakoimii.
We'll bring you the gravel.

In some other constructions involving two objects b'a *as, like* is used:

Ti iangoa te tia reirei arei b'a te rangirang.
We considered that teacher a crazy man.

E rineaki teuaaei b'a te tia moti.
This man was elected judge.

A rinea teuaaei b'a te tia moti.
They elected this man judge.

Some transitive verbs take objects which in English would be thought of as indirect objects:

Tai karea te ataei.
Don't throw (things) at the child.

E kaotaai n te rongrongo.
He explained the news to me.

Kabatai!
Give me more (cards, for example, as in cardgame slang).

Note that in these cases what in English would be considered the direct object is preceded by n.

5.5.1 Indirect objects

In the preceding section it was seen that only the verbs *angan* and *tuanga* take indirect objects. For other verbs prepositional phrases are used to fill the need:

E kanakoa te m'ane nakoIU.
He sent me the money.

N na wareka te boki anne nakoim.
I'll read you that book.

N na korea te reta aio nakoim.
I'll write you this letter.

Ko kakioa te kirii nakoina.
You chased the dog to him.

Kam kanakomaia te ika nakoira.
You sent us the fish.

5.6 Conditional sentences

These basically have two elements — an *if clause* and a *consequence*. The *if* clause can express some condition that either is *unknown* or is known to be *contrary to fact* by the speaker. The following are examples of the 'unknown' type:

Ngkana ko nooria ao tuangnga b'a N na nakoina.
If you see him, tell him that I'll go meet him.

Ngkana e a tia n roko ao e na bon tia n noora ana reta.
If he has arrived then he has certainly seen the letter.

Ngkana e b'aka te karau ao a na maiu raoi arokara.
If it rains our plants will do well.

The following are examples of the 'contrary-to-fact' type:

Ngke iaī au m'ane ao N na kabooa te kaa.
If I had the money I'd buy a car.

Ngke arona b'a e na kekeiaki n reirei ao e na bon reke ana anga n reirei i tinaniku.
If he would study well, he would get an opportunity to study abroad.

Ngke arona b'a ko wanawana ao ko na bon aki okiria.
If you were smart you wouldn't go back to him.

By no means would all native speakers agree with the above interpretations. Note that ngkana was used in the 'unknown' type and ngke in the 'contrary-to-fact' type. This agrees with some, but not all individuals' speech. In any case if it were required to distinguish between the two types, this might be the easiest way to do it, and it is consistent with the speech of many individuals. The general pattern is then as follows:

Ngkana or Ngke + (if clause) + ao + (consequence)

or

(consequence) + ngkana or ngke + (if clause)

Note that in the inverted order the ao is not used:

Ko na bon aki okiria ngke arona b'a ko wanawana.
You wouldn't go back to him if you were smart.

The words ngkana and ngke are used in non-conditional sentences also, and mean *when* (conjunction), with ngkana used for the future, and ngke for the past. Thus, there is a possible confusion of this context with conditional sentences. For example, the first of the above examples could be rendered also by

Ngkana ko nooria ao tuangnga b'a N na nakoina.
When you see him, tell him that I'll go meet him.

and the third example could be rendered by

Ngkana e b'aka te karau ao a na maiu raoi arokara.
When it rains our plants will do well.

To avoid confusion the conditionality of the situation is sometimes emphasised by using ngkana tao or ngkana arona b'a or even ngkana tao arona b'a in place of ngkana, as follows:

Ngkana tao ko nooria ao tuangnga b'a N na nakoina.
If you see him, tell him that I'll go meet him.

Ngkana arona b'a ko nooria ao tuangnga b'a N na nakoina.
If you see him, tell him that I'll go meet him.

Ngkana tao arona b'a ko nooria ao tuangnga b'a N na nakoina.
If you see him, tell him that I'll go meet him.

In this way the ambiguity can be overcome, but it still leaves the sentence with ngkana alone a little ambiguous. Careful speakers may tend to avoid the use of ngkana alone in conditional sentences. It can be said, however, that when ngkana alone is used in past contexts, it must always indicate the conditional and never just 'when'.

In the examples with *ngke* in which the conclusion is in the future, there is no doubt that it is conditional. When the conclusion is also in the past there may be no satisfactory way to determine whether or not the sentence is conditional. Examples:

Ngke iai ana m'ane ao e kabooa te kaa.
When he had the money he bought a car. or If he had the money
he bought a car.

Ngke arona b'a iai ana m'ane ao e kabooa te kaa.
If he had the money he bought a car. or If he had had the money
he would have bought a car.

Both of these examples are subject to ambiguous interpretation, in different ways. In the first example it is not known whether the sentence is conditional or not. In the second the sentence is obviously conditional but it is uncertain whether the type is unknown or contrary-to-fact.

The problem apparently arises from the fact that the grammatical rules are not preserved in writing anywhere, and that the majority of speakers are not interested in precise expression.

5.7 Imperative sentences

The formation of positive and negative imperative forms of verbs has been discussed in section 4.8.3. These forms usually initiate the imperative sentence:

Anaa am raurau
Take your plate.

Tai matuu moa.
Don't go to sleep yet.

A more polite form of imperative is achieved by using *taiaoka please*:

Taiaoka te ran.
Please let me have some water.

Taiaoka ni kaitiaka te auti.
Please clean up the house.

Ko na taiaoka n aki nako.
Please don't go.

5.8 Exclamatory sentences

Adjectives are exclamatised by *ai ... ra*. Examples:

Ai tamaaroa ra te tabo aei!
How beautiful this place is!

Ai uareereke ra amii auti!
What a small house you have!

APPENDIX A1: Paradigm of transitive verbs

Kiribatese verbs seem to be quite regular. The existence of different forms or manners of taking suffixes may be explainable in terms of phonetics, but no such explanation is attempted here. The different verb forms under discussion as object pronouns. Thus, the appropriate verb forms depends on the nature (person and number) of the object. Neither the tense, nor the nature of the subject, determines the choice of verb form.

The similar table of Sabatier (1954) was a big help in the construction of this table. It was felt possible to simplify Sabatier's table by reducing the number of conjugations or groups from approximately seventeen to the present eleven. The authors believe that no important commonly-used form in present existence has been excluded thereby. Not all Kiribatese speakers will agree with this table, but the majority of speakers stick basically to this pattern. Some of the included forms have alternatives which are also commonly used, and in such cases the form retained in the table was felt to be more common.

The base form in the first column has no significance other than to provide something to stick the indicated suffixes onto. (In some cases this base form is not pronounceable by itself.) The infinitive form given in the second column is considered the basic form of the verb, and is the form that the main entry in a dictionary will have. This same infinitive form serves in cases where the direct object is singular and explicitly expressed. Thus, it is as though the suffix contains no object pronoun. The remaining forms are straightforward except when the object is third person plural. The reader is referred to section 4.8.6.4 for a discussion of this case, and to section 4.8.6 in general.

The forms shown on the same horizontal line as the group number are the suffixes to be added to the base form to get the desired resulting form. Following this first horizontal line are a number of example verbs which are typical of the corresponding group.

The following should be noted. An asterisk indicates that the indicated form is not used. There are alternative forms for the second person plural and the third person plural inanimate for the verbs of group eight. In group six it is seen that every suffix begins with the letter e. This e could have been considered part of the base instead of in the suffixes, but even if the table had been constructed accordingly no economy in the number of groups would have been achieved thereby. There are some verbs, such as *uiibuakaa* or *uiibuakaaea*, which can be conjugated in more than one acceptable way.

group	base	meaning
1	kab'aka kateke taeb'ai karena kareena	<i>to drop</i> <i>to poke</i> <i>to take (from someone)</i> <i>to put</i> <i>to stretch</i>
2	uaati katoobibi otoriki kamaninnanti uiibuaka	<i>to wash</i> <i>to surround</i> <i>to break in pieces</i> <i>to happen upon</i> <i>to speak badly of</i>
3	wete ata	<i>to call</i> <i>to know</i>
4	uiibuaka tararua	<i>to speak badly of</i> <i>to guard</i>
5	noor nimt	<i>to see</i> <i>to stick to</i>
6	kamaamaa taboraa kaboiraa katuuua taeraa kakaa	<i>to shame</i> <i>to speak obscenely to</i> <i>to make (something) stink</i> <i>to punish</i> <i>to speak badly of</i> <i>to search for</i>
7	kamaan karen karin	<i>to prolong</i> <i>to flavor with curry</i> <i>to insert</i>
8	katang ring tiring tuang	<i>to play (an instrument)</i> <i>to touch</i> <i>to kill</i> <i>to tell</i>
9	ari beeni	<i>to bake</i> <i>to paint</i>
10	kanim	<i>to stick</i>
11	nim	<i>to drink</i>

group	object expressed (infinitive)	first person singular	second person
1	a kab'akaa katekea taeb'aia kamenaa kareenaa	ai kab'akaai katekeai taeb'aiai kamenai kareenai	ko kab'akako katekeko taeb'aiko kamenako kareenako
2	a uaatia katoobibia otorikia kamaninnantia uiibuakaa	ai uaatiai katoobibiai otorikiai kamaninnantiai uiibuakai	iko uaatiiko katoobibiiko otorikiiko kamaninnantiiko uibuakaiko
3	a wetea ataa	ai weteai ataai	iko weteiko ataiko
4	aea uiibuakaaea tararuaea	ai uiibuakai tararuai	iko uibuakaiko tararuiko
5	a noora nimta	ai noorai nimtai	iko nooriko nimtiko
6	ea kamaamaaea taboraaea kaboiraaea katuuaea taeraaea kakaaea	ei kamaamaeai taboraaeai kaboiraeeai katuuaeai taeraaeai kakaeeai	eko kamaamaeeko taboraeeeko kaboiraeeeko katuuaeeko taeraeeeko kakaeeeko
7	a kamaana karena karina	ai kamaanai karenai karinai	iko kamaaniko kareniko kariniko
8	a katanga ringa tiringa tuanga	ai katangai ringai tiringai tuangai	ko katangko ringko tiringko tuangko
9	ia ariia beenia	ai ariai beeniai	iko ariiko beeniiiko
10	'a kanim'a	'ai kanim'ai	ko kanimko
11	a nima	ai *	ko *

group	third person singular	first person plural
1	a kab'akaa katekea taeb'aia kamenaa kareenaa	iira kab'akaiira katekeiira taeb'aiira kamenaiira kareenaiira
2	a uaatia katoobibia otorikia kamaninnantia uiibuakaa	iira uaatiira katoobibiira otorikiira kamaninnantiira uiibuakaiira
3	ia weteia ataia	iira weteiira ataiira
4	aea uiibuakaaea tararuaaea	iira uiibuakaiira tararuaiira
5	ia nooria nimtia	iira nooriira nimtiira
6	ea kamaamaaea taboraaea kaboiraaea katuuuaea taeraaea kakaaea	eira kamaamaeaira taboraaeaira kaboiraeeaira katuuuaeaira taeraaeaira kakaeeaira
7	na kamaanna karena karinna	iira kamaaniira kareniira kariniira
8	nga katangnga ringnga tiringnga tuangnga	iira katangiira ringiira tiringiira tuangiira
9	ia ariia beenii	ira ariira beeniiira
10	m'a kanimm'a	wiira kanimwiira
11	ma nimma	iira *

group	second person plural	third person plural animate
1	ingkamii kab'akaingkamii katekeingkamii taeb'aiingkamii karenaingkamii kareenaingkamii	iia kab'akaiia katekeiia taeb'aiia karenaiaia kareenaiaia
2	ingkamii uaatiingkamii katoobibiingkamii otorikiingkamii kamaninnantiingkamii uiibuakaingkamii	iia uaatiia katoobibiia otorikiia kamaninnantiia uiibuakaiia
3	ingkamii weteingkamii ataingkamii	iia weteiia ataiia
4	ingkamii uiibuakaingkamii tararuaingkamii	iia uiibuakaiia tararuaiia
5	ingkamii nooringkamii nimtingkamii	iia nooriia nimtiia
6	eingkamii kamaamaaeingkamii taboraaeingkamii kaboiraaeingkamii katuuaaeingkamii taeraaeingkamii kakaaeingkamii	eia kamaamaaeia taboraaeia kaboiraaeia katuuaaeia taeraaeia kakaaeia
7	ingkamii kamaaningkamii kareningkamii kariningkamii	iia kamaaniia kareniia kariniia
8	kamii, ingkamii katangkamii, katangingkamii ringkamii, ringingkamii tiringkamii, tiringingkamii tuangkamii, tuangingkamii	iia katangiia ringiia tiringiia tuangiia
9	ngkamii aringkamii beeningkamii	ia ariia beeniia
10	wingkamii kanimwingkamii	wiia kanimwiia
11	ingkamii *	iia *

group	third person plural inanimate	passive
1	i kab'akai katekei taeb'aai kamenai kareenai	aki kab'akaaki katekeaki taeb'aiaki karenaaki kareenaaki
2	i uaatii katoobibii otorikii kamaninnantii uiibuakai	aki uaatiaki katoobibiaki otorikiaki kamaninnantiaki uiibuakaaki
3	i wetei atai	aki weteaki ataaki
4	aei uiibuakaei tararuaei	aeaki uiibuakaeaki tararuaeaki
5	ii noorii nimtii	aki nooraki nimtaki
6	ei kamaamaei taboraei kaboiraai katuuai taeraai kakaai	eaki kamaamaeaki taboraeaki kaboiraaki katuuaiaki taeraeaki kakaaiaki
7	ii kamaanii karenii karinii	aki kamaanaki karenaki karinaki
8	ii -- katangii, katang ringii, ring tiringii, tiring tuangii, tuang	aki katangaki ringaki tiringaki tuangaki
9	i arii beenii	aki ariaki beenaki
10	wii kanimwii	'aki kanim'aki
11	-- nim	aki nimaki

APPENDIX A2: Kiribatese - English

A

aaba	lands	ai natiu	nephew or niece
aama	<i>n.</i> hammer	aine	<i>n.</i> female
aan	under	ai tarius	cousin
Aaro	religions	akanne	those
aba	<i>n.</i> land	akawa	<i>v.</i> to fish; <i>n.</i> fishing
abaia	their land; land of	akawam	your fishing
ab'aab'aki	big, large	ake	which were; that are
ab'akin	size of	akea	none
Abaiaang	<i>p.n.</i> island in the Gilberts between Tarawa and Marakei	akekei	those (far)
abam	your land; your country	aki	not
abam'akoro	island	am'arake	<i>v.</i> to eat; <i>n.</i> a food
abam'akoron	islands of	Amerika	<i>p.n.</i> America
abamii	your <i>pl.</i> islands; your <i>pl.</i> countries	amii	your <i>pl.</i>
abau	my island, my country	amori	<i>n.</i> kind of fish
abea	<i>n.</i> bait	ana	his/her/its
abeana	its/his/her bait; to use as bait	anaa	<i>v.</i> take; <i>n.</i> fish
Abemaama	<i>p.n.</i> island in the Gilberts, east of Kuria and Aranuuka.	ana Ekaareetia te Atua	<i>p.n.</i> Church of God
Aberika	<i>p.n.</i> Afrika	aneang	<i>n.</i> mast
abong	four days	anene	<i>v.</i> to sing; <i>n.</i> a singing or song
aei	this	anenei	to sing them
aeka	sort; kind	ani/an	let
aekan	sort of, kind of	anian	<i>n.</i> onion
aekia	take from (as food from fire)	anima	<i>n.</i> bailer for bailing out water from the canoe
aera	what ... doing?	aanne	that
ai	<i>n.</i> fire	ano	<i>n.</i> ball
aia	their; <i>n.</i> firewood	antai	who?
aioo	this	ang	<i>n.</i> the wind
aika	who; which	anga	<i>v.</i> to give; <i>n.</i> a shoulder
aikai	these	angaatai	<i>n.</i> right hand
ai m'aaneu	cousin of opposite sex	angaataiu	my right hand side
		anganai	give me
		angaraa	<i>n.</i> long axe

angiaa the majority of them
 angin wind of; the majority of
 ao and; *n.* line (as for fishing)
 aoa *n.* hour
 aobiti *m.* office
 aobiti ni bureitiman *n.* police
 office
 aobiti n reta *n.* post office
 Aokati *n.* August
 aomata *n.* people
 aon on
 aonga in order that
 aoni/aon on (surface of)
 aonnaba *n.* on land
 aonnaaba world
 aono *n.* group (especially for
 islands)
 aono ni Kiribati *n.* Gilbert Group
 aontano *n.* earth, ground
 aontaari *n.* surface of sea
 aoraki *n.* sick, sick person,
 illness
 aoranti *n.* orange
 Aotiteeria *p.n.* Australia
 ara our; the name
 araia their names
 aram your *sing.* name
 aramii your *pl.* names
 aran the name of
 arana his/her/its name
 aranaki named, called
 araniia name or call them
 Aranuuka *p.n.* island in the
 Gilberts almost between Kuria
 and Abemaamaa
 arara our names
 arau my name
 are who, which; that (yonder)

arei yonder
 ari *n.* spathe (coconut); eyebrow
 aro way, manner
 Aro religion
 aroia their way, their manner
 aroka *v.* to smell; *n.* plant
 aron way/manner of; like
 aroni way/manner of
 Aro ni Moomon *n.* Mormon Church
 Arorae *p.n.* the last island in
 the south of the Gilberts
 aroro four generations
 arou my way/manner of
 ata *n.* rope tied from mast to
 outrigger (canoe); *adj.* wide or
 broad
 ataa *v.* know
 ataei *n.* children
 ataein children of
 ataeinimm'aane *n.* boy
 atai know (*pl.* form)
 ataia know him/her/it
 atama *n.* gravel (small stones)
 atiibu *n.* stone
 atim'akoro *n.* islet
 atuu *n.* head
 Atua *p.n.* God
 Atuaia their God
 atuun head of
 atuun te tautaeka *n.* Government
 Headquarter
 au my; calk
 aua four
 auee exclamation of intensive
 feeling
 auti *n.* house
 auti ni iruaa *n.* house for guest;
 guest-house, hotel

B

- baa *n.* midrib of coconut leaf;
 leaf of plants
 b'aab'aiaa *n.* pawpaw
 b'aai *n.* things
 b'aai ni mm'akuri *n.* things for
 working, tools
 b'aai n taetae *n.* things for
 talking, telephone, speaker
 baaire *n.* measurement; arrangement
 baairea *n.* to measure; to make
 arrangement
 baakee *n.* tobacco
 baakeena *its* tobacco
 baan leaf of (see baa)
 baana *its* leaf (see baa)
 b'aanaki filled with (oil,
 kerosene, benzine, etc.)
 baanikaina *n.* pandanus leaf
 baannii *n.* coconut leaf
 baareka dirty
 baabooboo yellow
 b'aene *n.* basket
 bai *n.* hand
 b'ai *n.* thing
 b'ai n aoraki *n.* thing for
 sickness, medicine
 b'ai ni kab'ara tikurruu *n.* thing
 for unscrewing, screwdriver
 b'ai ni katena *n.* thing for
 holding tight, pliers
 b'ai n tangira *n.* thing for love,
 gift, present
 B'aib'ara *n.* bible
 b'aibi *n.* pipe
 baiia *their* hands
 baika *these* things
 baikara *what* things?
 baim *your* hand
 b'aim *your* dress (clothing)
 b'ain *thing* of clothing
 b'aina *to wear* (*sing.* form)
 b'aini *to wear* (*pl.* form)
 b'ainaki worn, used
 b'airi *n.* nose
 B'airiki *n.* Capital town on
 Tarawa where Government Head-
 quarters are
 b'aiti *n.* smoking pipe
 b'aiu *my* dress
 baiu *my* hand
 b'aka *v.* fall
 b'akantaai *v.* afternoon
 bakatibu *v.* ancestor
 b'anaam *your* voice
 b'anaan *voice* of
 b'anaanaa banana
 b'anaaia *their* voice
 B'aanaba *n.* name of an island
 (Ocean Island)
 bane finished
 b'anga *v.* to hide in a hole;
 mosquito net
 b'ange *n.* chin
 b'angke *n.* bank
 b'aoua bend
 b'ara *v.* undone; *n.* hat
 b'aranako see b'ara *v.*
 b'arakarabe paragraph
 bareka see baareka; dirty, filthy
 b'ata black, blue
 bati many
 b'ati *n.* bus
 b'aatika *n.* bicycle
 b'aukin *n.* pumpkin
 Beberuare *n.* February
 beeba *n.* paper

- beebete easy, light
 beeki *n.* pig
 beem your lavalava
 been coconuts; lavalava of; pen
 beero bell
 beetin basin
 bekobeko *v., n.* cough
 ben *n.* coconut
 bentira *n.* pencil
 beretitenti *n.* president
 Beruu *n.* island west of Nikunau
 Betebeke *n.* Pacific
 Beetio *n.* port town on Tarawa
 bia denoting a wish; *n.* fish ovaries
 biia *n.* beer
 biibii *n.* throat
 biiua/biwa fever
 bike *n.* beach
 Bikenibeu *n.* town on Tarawa where Central Hospital is located.
 bikoukou pregnant
 bina *n.* last born child; come last
 bino *n. v.* sitting dancing; to do sitting dance
 bira *v.* plait
 biri *v.* run
 biriari *n.* full stop
 birim'aaka run fast
 biri mweere run slowly
 biroto *n.* stomach
 birotou my stomach
 bitaki changed
 biti *n.* knife
 Biitii *n.* Fiji
 Boobooti *n.* Cooperative
 boobootaki use to gather together
 boitin poison
 boki *n.* book
 boki n anene *n.* song book, hymn book
 boki n tataro *n.* prayer book
 bon truly
 bong *n.* day; night
 boongana useful
 boonganana use of
 boonganana his/her/its use
 bongin day of
 boni truly
 bonota *v.* close, shut
 bonotaki closed, shut
 boo up (especially for time); *n.* hit, cost
 boob'ai *n. v.* shopping
 boobete cheap
 booia strike it; ring it (the bell)
 booki *n.* books
 boona price, cost of
 boora *n.* bowl
 booro *n.* ball
 bootaki *v. n.* assemble
 boou new/my salary
 borau *v.* sail
 boti *n.* marked places in the m'aneaba, etc.
 botu weariness, fatigue
 botura our weariness
 bouan post of
 bua lost
 buaakaka bad
 buaka rough, not calm
 Buuariki *n.* a name of a village on Tarawa
 bubu *v. n.* smoke (as from fire, etc.)

bubuaka bad; use to battle
 bubua ni bai *n.* elbow
 bubua ni wae *n.* knee
 bubuia to rub it
 buubura big, large
 buki back
 bukin for; back of
 bukina because
 bun *n.* shell fish
 bungiaiki born
 bungintaai *n.* sunset
 buoka *v.* help
 buokai help me
 buokaki helped (*passive*)
 buoki help (*in pl. form*)
 buokiko help you
 burae hair; feather
 burae ni man *n.* feather
 Buranti *n.* France
 burakibooti *n.* blackboard
 burati *v. n.* brush
 buraau brown
 buraawa *n.* flour
 bure *n.* wrong; a mistake; a sin
 bureen *n.* plane
 bureitiman *n.* policeman
 buriki *n.* brick
 Buritan *n.* Britain
 buro boiling
 buroburo bubble
 buroo hearts
 Butaritari *n.* second island in
 north of Gilberts
 buteeta *n.* potato
 buti run, as for vehicles and boats
 butibooro *v. n.* football
 butiko request you

butim'aai welcome
 butu *n.* foot (measurement); *v.* to
 push
 buu *n.* wife or husband
 buun wife of or husband of
 buuta to call out (as to fight);
 to withdraw
 bwe *v. n.* a paddle; a rudder
 bweennarina driven by means of
 paddle or rudder
 bweennarina *n.* a paddle; *v.* to
 paddle
 bwenauaki divided, cut into
 bwereeti *v. n.* press

E

Eberi *n.* April
 eea air
 Eita *p.n.* village on Tarawa
 Ekaretia *n.* Church
 ekuetoa *n.* equator
 emb'aea *n.* empire
 eng yes
 engaa where
 Engiran *p.n.* England
 Ereti *p.n.* Ellice
 eta up
 eti right, correct, straight
 ewanin *n.* coconut husk

I

ia blood vessel; tide/hair
 iaa where
 iaati *n.* yard
 iabuti *n.* high tide
 iai thereby, there is, there are
 iangoa *n.* think of

ianimaama	n. moonlit	imwiim	after you
iaon	on/over	imwiin	after
iaona	on/over it	imwiina	after him/her/it
ibu	n. shell of coconut	in	close, shut
ibukiia	for them	inaai	n. mat (coconut leaf)
ibukin	for	inaaomata	n. independence;
ibukina	for him/her/it, because; at the back of him/her/it	inti	n. inch
ibun	shell	ingaabong	n. morning
ibuna	its shell	iraanaki	how (a thing, etc.) is done
ibuobuoki	helpful; n. helping	irakea	v. to hoist
ie	n. sail	iraman	how many (for animals)
iein	v. marry; n. marriage	iran	how to do (things); braiding strands of
ieka	v. to flood; n. flood	iraanna	how to do (a thing)
iena	its sail	iraorao	friendly
iika	n. fishes	irarikin	beside
ika	n. fish	iraua	how many?
ikai	here	ireuii	n. tooth brushing; v. to brush teeth
ikan	fish of	iri	v. go with, follow, attend
ikanne	right there	iriko	go with you; n. meat
ikaraaba	n. v. hide and seek	irikona	its flesh
ikarii	n. bony fish	irouia	by them
ikawai	n. grown-up	iroum	by you
ikawaina	his/her/its age; growing up	iroun	by, of
ikekei	over there	irouna	by him/her
I Kiribati	n. Kiribatese	iroura	by us
ikoaki	injured	iruaa	n. guest
ikoaki	n. wounded person	itauu	n. boxing
ikotaki	v. add to; included	itera	n. half
ikotaki	n. gathering	iteran	half of
im'aaim	before you	iterana	half of it
im'aain	before	iteran te kawai	n. side fo the road
im'aaiu	before me	iti	n. lightning
imanaki	scaled	itibong	n. half moon
I Matang	n. white people; Europeans		

itibui seventy
 itiia scoop it up
 itiua seven
 itoi *n.* star

K

kaa *n.* car
 kaab'a *n.* corrugated iron, copper
 Kaabong *n.* Thursday
 kaai *n. pl.* timber; woods; stick;
 trees
 kaaia their timber, woods, sticks
 kaaibibiti to exchange
 kaa'in people of; owner of;
 occupier of
 kaaina its people; owner; occupier
 kaainnabau my wife or husband
 kaainnabana his wife/her husband
 kaa'itiboo meet
 kaa'itara face to face
 kaa'itaraan opposite of
 kaakang keen to eat
 kaaki take away, to put
 kaan almost, close to
 kaanga seem
 kaangaanga difficult hard
 kaantaninga to hope for; expect;
 n. hope; expectation
 kaati *n.* playing card
 kaawa *n.* village; poor
 kabae *n.* knot; bandage
 kabaeaki tied, bandaged
 kabaeannatuu hair scarf
 kabaei *pl.* kabaea
 kab'akaa to drop
 kabanei to finish them all
 kabane all, together
 kabanea to finish
 kab'angab'angaa to make a hole;
 to bore a hole
 kab'araa undo, untie
 kab'araaki undone, untied
 kab'arab'ara to preach
 kab'arab'arai to describe
 kab'araoa pour out (water)
 kab'aroi pour out (*pl. form*)
 kaabentaa carpenter
 kabeta put on water to float
 kabetan floater of
 kabooaki bought; to get to meet
 at the ends, points
 kabi keel
 kaboonganaa to use
 kaboonganaaki used
 kaboonganaan use of
 kaboonganai use (*pl. form*)
 kaboo farewell; to complete
 kabooa buy
 kabooanako sell
 kabooi buy (*pl. form*)
 kabooiii to have a conference; a
 conference
 kabuanib'ai accident
 kabubu blunt; a powdered food
 made from pandanus fruit
 kabuabuta to run several times
 kabuebue hot
 kaburoaki boiled
 kabururu wash one's face
 kabuta to drive; to cause to move
 something
 kabutikai a kind of game played
 with playing cards
 kaea go for; to chase
 kaei chase; go for (*pl. form*)

kaeta v. straighten; correct
 kaetai correct me; straighten me
 kaetia correct him/her/it;
 straighten him/her/it
 kaetiko correct you; put you right
 kai n. stick
 kaibuke n. ship
 kaiia their sticks; stick for them;
 points lost in game
 kaika v. bail water out of
 kaikan bailing of
 kaimatoa stiff action, kind of
 Kiribatese dancing movement
 kaimoa n. crews of the ship
 kain sick of; wood of
 kaina its stick, its wood
 kainikawaawaa n. gutter
 kainiwene n. bed
 kainnakotinianiku n. latrine
 kaintekateka n. chair
 kairabong what day?
 kairai lead me; guide me; direct
 kairiko lead you; guide you;
 direct you
 kaaigua mistaken
 kaitarai give opposites
 kaitiakan cleaning of
 kaitiakia clean it
 Kaitibong n. Seventh day
 kakaaea v. look for; find out
 kakaaei look for; find out (pl.
 form)
 kakaaki botu v. pass time
 kaakanaki edible
 kakang sharp
 kakangia v. sharpen
 kakanoa having something inside

kakibaa to cause to fly, jump,
 leap
 kakoauaa believe; to say something
 or someone is true; to prove
 kakooa to fasten tightly
 kakua tiresome
 kakukurei pleasant, pleasing
 kam you (pl.)
 kam'aa cook
 kamaamana its window
 kamaanaki kept longer
 kam'aim'ai molasses (cooked toddy)
 kam'aitoro cold
 kamaiu life giving, supper/
 pleasant
 kamaiuaki saved, rescued, healed
 kam'anea v. to trick; betray
 kamani previously, before
 kam'anuu to fold (pl. form)
 kamariri chilly
 kamateb'ai study
 kamatoai make them strong
 kamatuu Protestant Church
 kan want, wish
 kana v. eat
 kanaia their food;
 kanaki eaten
 kanakoaki sent away
 kanakoi take away; sent away
 (pl. form)
 kanana his/her/its food
 kang eat (pl. form)
 kangaa how
 kaangai thus
 kangkang delicious
 kangkangin deliciousness of

kani want; wish
 kaaniia to go closer
 kaniiman fifth; come fifth
 kanikina *n.* the mark or sign;
 kanikinaaea *v.* to mark or sign
 Kanimabong *n.* Friday
 kanoaaki filled
 kanoaia fill it
 kanoan content of
 kanoana its content
 kaantaninga to hope for, expect
 n. the hope, expectation
 kantoka the fare or freight
 kaoaki orders; invited
 kaoi *pl. v.* order (things)
 kaokoro different or difference
 kaona fill up
 kaongoraaei inform me
 Kaonobong Saturday
 kaotii show them (things)
 karaaure farewell
 karab'arab'a to say thankful words
 karaki to tell a story; to talk
 karaanga *n.* river; *n.* to flatter;
 stick dancing, Kiribatese kind
 of dancing
 karaoa do, make
 karaoaki made
 karaoan the doing or making of
 karaoi do; make them (things)
 karaoia do it or make it
 karatin *n.* kerosene
 karau *n.* rain
 karaun *n.* fishing net
 karau tanginako *n.* shower of rain
 karawa *n.* sky, heaven
 kare *v.* blow; throw

karekea get; catch
 karekeaki caught
 karekean catching of
 kareke nano love making
 karewe *n.* a toddy; sweet
 kariki *n.* bread; descendant;
 adj. to become pregnant
 karikirake *n.* business; promotion
 karimoa *n.* first born child
 karimwiina second child to him/her
 karin put them on; divide; put
 them in
 karina put it on; divide; put it
 in
 karinaki *p.p.* put on; divided;
 put in
 karinrin admitting
 karo *n.* father
 karokoa to wait until the coming
 of; the time of
 karongoaa to make noise; *n.* noise
 karuoa to put down; to get some-
 thing/somebody down
 kataaki *p.p.* tried; tempted
 katabea to make someone busy
 katabetabe to be bothering
 kataia try
 katairiki *n.* meal taken in the
 evening
 katake kind of Kiribatese song
 mostly sung in a talking manner;
 chant
 katam'a *n.* cat
 katangitang play music on any
 musical instrument; *n.* instrument
 katararakea to put someone or
 something face up
 katarinaki being extracted from
 coconut (kernel)
 katati knife for cutting toddy

kataua v. to try on as dress etc.,
permit

katauraoi preparation

katautau misuse; an approximate
calculation

katawanou n. meal taken at noon

katea v. to build; to establish

kateaki p.p. built, established

katebe v. spear fishing

katei n. custom

kateitei v. n. construction

katenaa make it crowded; tied;
joined

Katenibong n. Wednesday

katerea v. to show

katoaa v. to make a pair

katoka v. to stop, halt; cure

katokaa v. put something on
something or somebody

katoki pl. v. stop; cure

katoomimia v. surround

katoomimiaki p.p. surrounded

Kaatorika n. Catholic Church

katorobubua to kneel

kau pair of shoes

kauaaki n. trawl fishing; v. to
trawl a fishing line

Kauabong n. Tuesday

kauarinan secondary; n. second
line/class

kaunai make me angry

kauniko make you angry

kauniwae n. shoe

kaunrab'ata v. n. wrestling

kautuaa v. to grate (as coconut)

kawainaa make me feel light,
comfortable after eating too
much

kawaekoa v. to hurry; n. haste

kawaerake n. pant

kawai n. path, lane, road, street

kaawakiniia keep them, look after
them

kawara v. to visit

kauiremweko to eat/drink; talk
slowly

kauitataka to eat/drink; talk
fast

ke or

kena v. dig

kewe v. tell a lie; n. lie

kiaro n. outrigger of a canoe

kiba v. jump, fly

kibee v. n. torch fishing

kibu n. verse of a song or poetry

kibuntaeka n. sentence

kie n. mat made of pandanus
leaves

kiie n. plural of kie

kiika n. octopus

kiitani to leave; to abandon; to
go from

kinaai v. recognise them (plural
verb form of kinaa)

kinaa v. recognise

kinaka n. sore

kimoa v. to steal; n. a rat

kimototo short; not long

kiriaria later on

Kiribati n. Kiribatese

kiriin green

kirikiti v. n. cricket (game)

kiromiita n. kilometer

koaua n. truth; adj. true, real

koikoi kind of shellfish; to grate
using shell

kokookoo used to be jealous

konaa can, to be able to

konana his/her/its catch
 koo tight
 kooti coat (animal or dressing)
 koobe coffee
 kootiueei causeway
 koowana governor
 kora string, cord
 koraki class (in school); relative
 korakora strong; big
 koran string of; colon
 korea cut
 koreaki *p.p.* been cut
 koreia cut it
 koroia cut it
 koro cut; husking stick
 koroboki *v.* write
 koro *v.* cut them; write them
 (*pl.* verb form of korea)
 korokarewe *v. n.* cut toddy
 korone *n.* colony
 koronen colony of
 koum'ara *n.* small shell fish
 kua tired; *n.* a whale
 kuata quarter
 kukurei happy glad
 kun *n.* skin
 kunan song of
 kunnikai cloth
 kunnikaim your cloth
 kunnikaiu my cloth
 kuo(ta) to skin
 kuotaki *p.p.* skinned
 kuoti *pl.* verb form of kuota
 kuri almost; to get something
 hastily or greedily
 Kuria *n.* island in the central
 Gilberts
 kuuka *n.* a cook; a cooker

M

maa *n.* fish trap
 m'aain before
 m'aaka fast; powerful; *n.* power
 maan long; *pl.* of man (animal)
 m'aanem your sister/brother (*opp.*
 sex sibling)
 m'aaneu my sister/brother (*opp.*
 sex sibling)
 m'aangan branch of
 maanra how long?
 Maati *n.* March
 maatiati matches
 maatimtim dripping
 m'ae lace
 maeaoia west of them
 maeon west of
 maeka live, stay; *n.* the home
 maekia to cut it tenderly
 m'aenrora *n.* necklace
 mai from
 maiaki *n.* south
 maiakin south of
 maiakina south of it
 M'aiana *p.n.* island south of
 Tarawa
 maibiibi broken into tiny pieces;
n. tiny pieces
 m'aiee *n.* Kiribatese dancing
 maii pale white
 m'aim'ai wet
 mainaina white
 maingim your left-hand side
 mainiku *n.* east
 mainikun east of
 maire *n.* mile
 m'aiti many
 m'aitiia their number

m'aitoro cold
 maiu *n.* life; alive
 maiuia their life
 maium your life
 m'aka *n.* scar; decay; sore
 m'akeiia their thorns (on a
 pandanus leaf)
 M'akin *n.* the very last island
 in the north of the Gilberts
 m'akoro *n.* part
 m'akoron part of
 m'akorona its part
 mamaara weak, feeble
 m'am'ananga *v.* traveling (used
 to); *n.* the traveling
 mamaraki keep aching (used to)
 man animal; from
 m'anai *n.* crab (land)
 m'ananga *v.* travel
 mane *n.* old
 m'ane *n.* money
 m'aneaba *n.* a big assembly
 building
 m'aneka *n.* footstep
 manena useful; use of it
 manga again
 manging sour; drunk
n. intoxicating drink
 m'angko *n.* mug, cup
 mani/man from
 m'anib'a *n.* well
 manin animal/birds of
 maninnara *n.* mosquito
 m'aninga forget
 mannikiba *n.* bird
 mao bitter; healed; *n.* a bush
 m'aoto break (as stick, pencil,
 etc.); *n.* fracture

mara soft (after soaking); wet;
 bald
 marae *n.* field
 marai *n.* the kernel of a green
 coconut
 m'arairai long (esp. when some-
 thing is hanging down)
 Marakei *n.* island between
 Abaiaang and Butaritari
 maraki *n.* pain, ache
 maraki n atuu *n.* headache
 maraki ni birotu *n.* stomach-ache
 maraki ni uii *n.* toothache
 marau somewhat soft
 maraurau quite soft
 marawa *n.* ocean
 m'are *v.n.* to wed, to marry
 marenaia between them
 marenan between
 marenaua *n.* countryside
 marooroo *n. v.* engage in
 conversation
 marurung healthy
 mata *n.* eye
 mataia their eyes
 matan the eyes of
 matana his/her/its eyes
 mataniuii *n. v.* boss, director
 chief; border; edge
 mataniuiina its border
 matau *n.* my eyes
 matauninga not courteous
 mate *n.* die
 matenten thick
 matoa stuff; hard, strong
 matuu *n. v.* sleep
 m'au, m'auu dry
 maungatabu *n. v.* general assembly

mauri good health
 maawaawa blue
 meaang n. north
 meaangin north of
 Meei n. May
 meerī n. mail; ferry
 mena stay, to be at a certain place
 miita n. meter
 minita n. minister
 miniti n. minutes
 mino v. go round, spin; n. file
 miriki n. milk
 mitinare n. missionary, pastor
 mm'aane n. man
 mm'akuri v. n. work
 mm'aanako v. fall away, fall out
 mmanii thin
 moa first; front; n. chicken
 moaa v. call at
 moan very; front part of; first
 moana call at
 moanaki called at; started; hit by
 moani first
 Moanibong n. Monday
 moaningaabong n. early morning
 moanrinan n. first class/line/row; primary
 moantaai early (also n.)
 moantairiki n. evening
 moimoto n. green coconut
 moko v. n. smoke (pipe, cigar, etc.)
 mokon smoke of
 moko te rauara n. smoke made of chipped tobacco and pandanus leaf
 Moomon n. Mormon religion, church

mooī v. drink
 moone n. hell
 morikoi n. name of a fish
 motirawa v. to leave, rest; n. a holiday
 mumuta v. n. vomit
 mweere slow, late
 mweengau my home
 mwiin after, result of

N

na will
 naa n. group of stones on the reef; collection of
 naaibi knife
 naaka word for calling the attention of more than one person
 naakai these people
 naakanne those people
 naakekei those people there
 naano down
 naango flies (insect) (pl.)
 naao waves
 naba too, also; again
 nakea where to
 nako to go to
 nakoīia to them
 nakoim to you
 nakoina to him/her/its
 nakomai come here
 nakon to
 nakona his/her/its departure
 nakonako walk
 Nam person article for males
 nama n. lagoon

nam'akaina *n.* moon
 Nan person; article for males
 (N. Gilb.)
 Nang person; article for males
 nang well
 nango *n.* fly
 nano deep; heart or mind
 nanoia their minds/heart/thought
 nanokaawaki sad, unhappy
 nanon mind of; depth of; meaning
 of
 nanou my mind
 nanona his/her mind; its meaning
 nanona to mean something
 Nao word to call a man's or boy's
 attention; *n.*
 nao *n.* wave
 naon waves of
 nati *n.* a child
 natiia their child
 natina his/her child
 natira our child
 natiu my child
 Nauru *n.* name of a country
 (island)
 neera nail
 neeti *n.* nurse
 Nei person article for females
 Neiko word used to call a female's
 attention
 neie this woman/girl (usually
 followed by name)
 neiei this woman/girl
 neienne that woman/girl
 neierei that woman/girl there
 neinei having water inside; swampy
 newe *n.* tongue; lodged up in a
 tree, etc.
 ngaa where?; thousand

ngae enough
 ngngai me
 ngaia him/her/its
 ngaina daylight
 ngkai now
 ngkam I don't know
 ngkamii you (*pl.*)
 ngkana when, if
 ngkanne then
 ngke when
 ngkoa long ago
 ngkoananoa yesterday
 ngkoe you (*sing.*)
 ngongo itching
 nii coconut tree; bitter
 niiman five persons/animals/
 small fish, etc.
 niiri to roll them up
 niiraki rolled up
 niirakina its rolling
 niirana its rolling cord (coconut
 spathe rolling string)
 niiri *v.* plural form of niiria
 niiria to roll it up
 nikira *n.* remainder; *v.* deliver
 Nikunau *n.* third island from the
 south
 nim *v. pl.* to drink; *adj.* stuck
 nimaia their drink
 nimaki *v.* drunk
 nimaua five (general)
 ningngaabong tomorrow
 nningai when?
 Nobemb'a *n.* November
 Nonouti *n.* islands in the Gilberts
 between Tabiteuea and Abemaama
 noora *n.* see
 nooraki seen

noori see (pl. form of noora)
 nooria see him/her/it
 nooriko see you
 nuukaia middle of them
 nuuka n. middle; center; back
 nuukan back/center/middle of
 nuukanibong n. midnight
 nuutibeeba n. newspaper

O

oi n. torch light made by rolling
 dry coconut leaves
 oi ni kibee n. torch for torch-
 fishing (on reef)
 oi n tatae n. torch for torch-
 fishing (for flying fish)
 oki v. come back; n. return
 okira return to; come back to
 Okitoob'a n. October
 okiu my return
 okoro n. difference
 okoro different
 on full up; turtle
 onauti flying fish
 onean replacement of
 ongo v. hear
 ongoraa listen to
 onobui sixty
 Onootoa p.n. island in the
 Gilberts between Tabiteuea and
 Tamana
 onoua six
 oo n. wall
 oon wall of
 oonnaoraki hospital
 oota bright, clear; n. light
 ora n. low tide

orean beat of
 oreano n. ball bat (kind of game
 where one group bats the ball
 and the other group tries to
 catch)
 otab'aniniaki surrounded
 oti v. rise; show; appear
 otintaai n. sunrise

R

raama outrigger side of a canoe
 raamii n. playing card game
 raanti n. launch
 rab'a n. thanks; car or motor-
 bike tire
 rababa wide, broad
 rabakau clever, skillful
 rabakauu my skill, my knowledge
 rab'ata n. body; to hold to one's
 body
 rab'atau my body
 rabono eel
 raeuaia tear it; break it (as a
 glass)
 rai withered; layers of canoe
 planks
 rairaki turn
 rairan translation of
 raiti n. rice
 rake lucky; up, upward
 rama n. canoe float (outrigger)
 ram'a n. forehead; gable of house
 ran n. water
 ranga n. capsize, overturn
 rangi very
 ranna its water
 ranniben n. coconut cream

rannimoimoto *n.* green coconut
 water
 raoi exactly, properly; calm (as
 calm sea); fine, peaceful; peace
 raoiroi good, nice
 raonna be friends with; to
 accompany
 raoraona be friends with
 raou my friend
 raraa bleeding; blood
 raranga *v.* weave; *n.* weaving
 rarangaaki *p.p.* woven
 rarangaan the weaving of
 rarikin beside, near, side of
 raroa far, distant
 raroaia their distances
 raroara how far?
 rauara cigarette paper made
 pandanus leaf
 rauarana its rauara (see rauara)
 rauia their thatches (house)
 rauna its thatch
 raurau plate; record (for record
 player)
 raurau ni wae top part of the foot
 raure *v.* separate
 raure nako separate, apart
 rawa refuse, dislike
 rawaawata heavy;
 rebwerebwe motorbike; successive
 crashing around sounding like
 thunder
 reerio radio
 reirei school
 reirei i bukini mm'akuri technical
 institute
 reirei ni kaimoa marine training
 school
 reirei n neeti school of nursing

reirei n tia reirei teachers'
 college
 reireiti join together (as short
 pieces of string)
 rereaki mixed (drink/food)
 reta *n.* letter
 ria appear
 riai proper, better
 ribana cultivate
 riki happen, become; else; start
 to grow (as a plant)
 rikitemanna only child
 rimoa past; go before or go ahead
 of
 rimwii late; come late, come after
 rin get in, enter
 rinan *n.* row
 rineaki chosen, elected
 rinerine election
 riniaa their entrance, their
 admittance
 ririki *n.* year
 rurungaa rumbling
 Riitemb'a *n.* December
 roaroa rodfishing
 roka a lock; a game played with
 playing cards
 roki blind (as window blind)
 roko come, arrive, present
 rokoa their arrival, their
 presence
 rokona his/her presence or arrival
 rongorongo news
 rongorongoni news of
 roo anchor; rope; dark, darkness
 roobu rope
 rooki plural of roki
 rooro ages (*pl.* of age)

rooroo at anchor
 rooroko visit at regular times
 rootongitong very dark
 roroa neck
 roroo black
 ruabui ninety
 ruaiua nine
 ruu room
 ruoia Kiribatese dancing

T

taaba a long and broad knife
 taabia earring
 taabo n. places
 taai n. times
 taai nako all the time, everytime
 taanga couples; army
 taara towel
 taaraa dollar
 taari sea; seawater
 taariaki salted
 taarin salt of; sea of
 taatang cry
 taatangira fond of
 taba cheek
 Taabati n. Sunday
 tabe busy
 tabeai some sticks, etc.
 tabeka lift
 tabekia lift it
 tabeman somebody
 taberan top of (tree, plants and mast)
 tabetabe busy

tabetai sometimes
 tabeua some (things)
 Tabiteuea the biggest island in the Gilberts
 tabo place; point or end
 taboia their ends or points
 tabon end of; point of
 tabona its end, point
 tabonibai finger
 tabu holy; forbidden; sacred
 taeka word;
 taekan word of; news of
 taekana words or news about him/her/it
 taekin v. speak about (pl. of taekina)
 taekinna speak about it
 taetae speak
 taetae ni kawai old language; conversation; to speak
 tai don't; time; clock or watch
 taian those (things, people, etc.)
 taiani those (things, people, etc.)
 taiaoka please
 taibora table
 tain time of; season
 tairiki evening
 tairikin evening of
 taka thirsty
 takaakaro to play; n. the game
 takaakaroia their play
 takataka copra
 taakinaki spread out as with mat, etc.
 taku say
 tama father
 tam'akan climbing of

Tamana the second island from the
south of the Gilberts

tam'arakea climb up, ascend

tamau my father

taamnei picture

taamnein picture of

tanai axe (small)

tanginako faint sound

tangira want; like; love

tangirai want me; like me; love me

tangiria like him/ her/ it; love
him/her/it

tangiriko like you; love you

tangim your cry

tanimaeeontaa afternoo

tanimaainiku eastern side

tanninga wait; ear

tanningaia wait for him/her/it;
their ears

tanoni soil of; sand of; earth of

tanrake ocean side or eastern side

tanraken ocean side of, eastern
side of

tanrion lagoon side of; western
side of

tao about; perhaps

taobongiaa every other day

taokita doctor

taonna press down; stand or sit on;
postpone

taoo v. n. saw (tool)

taotaona pressing down; to be
patient

taraan the look of something/
someone

Tarawa capital island of
Kiribati

tarim your sibling of same sex

tarin his/her/its sibling of same
sex

tariu my sibling of same sex

taro taro (vegetable)

taromauri pray

tatae torch fishing for flying fish

tataneiai used to, accustomed

tatanninga wait; keep waiting

tataro to pray or a prayer

tau enough; fit

taua hold

tauaki p.p. held

tauakin hold of

tau manin tanninga singing with
hand covering the ear

taumate funnel

tau on turtle chase

taura lamp; something that gives
out light at night

tauraoi ready

tautaeka n. government; v. rule,
govern

tauu hold, plural verb form of
taua

tawanou noon

teaina one stick

Teaoraereke village on Tarawa

Tebetemb'a n. September

te boo same

tebotebo n. bath; v. bathe

tebubua one hundred

tebui ten followed by unit

tebui ma aua fourteen

tebui ma itiua seventeen

tebui ma nimaua fifteen

tebuiina ten

teei baby, child, kid; keep
standing

tei stand
 teinnaine girl
 teirake to stand up
 teitei standing
 tekateka sit
 teke pricked beaten, (as in a competition)
 tekena to beat (as in a competition)
 temanna one person/animal/small fish/insect
 tena bite
 tenaiko bite you
 tenamoko smoke, e.g. from tobacco
 tengaun ten people, animals etc.
 tenibui ma nimaua thirty five
 teniman three persons/animals, etc.
 teniua three (articles)
 teraa what?
 teuaae this man who (followed by name or description)
 teuaane that man
 teuaare that man who (followed by name or description)
 teuaarei that man there
 teuaaei this man
 teuana one (article)
 teutana some
 tewaana one canoe/ship/boat
 tia have/has/had
 tiaabora shovel
 tiaki not
 tianaki something like food, etc. prepared for a journey
 tianti cent (money)
 Tianuari n. January
 tiaoka chalk (blackboard pencil)
 tib'a just
 tib'aake lighter

tibeeranna spell it
 tibu swell; grandpa or grandma
 tibu te mm'aane grandfather
 tientemiita centimeter
 tii shoot out, gust out
 tiib'aati teapot
 tiibuta mini dress for women, like blouse
 tiireeree Kiribatese kind of dancing using short skirts
 tikareti cigarette
 tikiraoi beautiful, pretty, nice looking
 tiku stay, stay away
 tikuruu screws
 tinan mother of
 tinaniku outside
 tinanikun outside of
 tinau my mother
 tiriwae panty
 titaokin stockings
 titeboo same
 titiraki to ask, to question;
 n. a question
 titirakinai to ask me, to question me
 titirakinna to ask him/her, to question him/her
 titooa a store
 toa n. a giant; church feast; even
 toabuaka odd, not even
 toaraoi equal in number
 toka v. ride
 toki stop, halt, pause
 tomai join

tonotonon te bai soft part of
palm of hand
toobu *n.* soap
toobu ni ireuii toothpaste
Tooromon *n.* Solomon
totooa very big in size
toua hit with a foot; step on
tuaē *n.* pandanus dried pulp
tuai not yet
tuangai tell me
Tuurai *n.* July
Tuuta ni kawai junction
Tuutia *n.* Mass
Tuun *n.* June
Tuvalu *n.* group of islands
formerly named Ellice Islands

U

uaa *n.* fruit; *v.* bearing fruit
uaaia their fruits
uaakai these men
uaakanne those men
uaakekei those men there
uaana its fruit
uaanikai fruit
uaati wash
uabaa two leaves
uabui twenty
uaia both; *n.* racing
uara how it is?
uareereke small, tiny
uatai two times; twice
uii *n.* tooth; mouth
uiib'ara *n.* wheel barrow
uiiki *n.* week
uiikin week of

uiin mouth of; peak of; blade
(razor, knife, axe, etc.)
ukeuke *v.* examine, to test;
n. examination
uki ni bai fingernail
uki ni baim your fingernail
um'a *n.* house
um'an reirei *n.* house of
schooling, classroom
um'an tabu *n.* house of holiness;
church
um'an tebotebo *n.* house of bath,
bathroom
umunaki baked
unika *v. n.* plant
unikaki planted
uniki *v.* plant (*pl.* form of
unika)
unimm'aane *n.* old man
unuuniki *n.* agriculture; *v.* to
plant
uoman two people/animals or birds
uoti *v.* plural of uota: to carry
uoua two (general)
uraura red
uringa *v.* remember
uringnga *v.* remember it
uruaki broken
uto *n.* young coconut tree
utuu *n.* family, relative
uu *n.* eel trap

W

waa *n.* canoe
waaia their canoe
waaki gone on; progress
waan canoe of
waanikiba *n.* airplane

waanib'anga *n.* Kiribatese dance
 (for men)
 wae *n.* leg, foot
 waebua *n.* thumb
 waekoa walk fast; fast
 waeremwe walk slowly; slow
 waetata fast
 wanibui eighty
 waniman eight (men, women, etc.)
 (animate)

waniua eight (stone, books, etc.)
 (inanimate)
 wareka *v.* read; count
 warekia read it; count it
 warem'ane *v. n.* counting money
 wareware reading
 wene lie down
 wetea *v.* call

APPENDIX A3: English - Kiribatese

A

a (an) te
 able konaa
 about tao
 above ietan
 accept *v.* butim'aaea
 across riaon
 add *v.* ikota
 after imwiin
 afternoon tanimaeaaontaa
 afraid maaku
 again riki; manga
 against kaaitaraa; eekaanako
 age te roro; te ririki
 ago nako; te tai ae e nako
 agree *v.* nanoteuana
 air te eea
 airplane te waanikiba
 all ni kabane
 all right (OK) e raioiroi
 almost kuri
 alone tii ngngai; ngkoe

along ira anauna
 already n tia
 also naba
 although e ngae
 always n taai nako; n aki toki
 among ibuakon
 and ao, ma
 animal te man
 another teuana riki
 answer kaeka
 anything te b'ai teuana
 arm bai
 army te taanga ni buaka
 around ni katabanina
 arrive *v.* roko
 art te korotaamnei
 as n ai aron
 ask *v.* titiraki
 aspirin te b'atin
 at n, i
 anyway e aoria

B

baby te teei
 back akuu
 bad buaakaka
 bag te buua; te baeki
 baggage te batia
 ball te booro
 bank te bangke
 barber te tia koroira
 basket te b'aene
 bathing suit b'ai n tebotebo
 bathroom te roki n tebotebo
 bathtub te taabu n tebotebo
 battery te baetere
 beach te bike
 beat v. batibooa, oro
 beautiful tikiraoi
 become v. riki
 because i bukina b'la
 bed kainiwene
 bedroom ruu ni matuu
 beer te biia
 before im'aain
 begin v. waaki; moana
 behind akuun
 believe v. kakoauaa; omimakina
 below aan
 beside i rarikin
 best rangi n tamaroa
 better tamaroa riki
 between i marenan
 beyond tinanikun; maikoan
 big buubura
 bill (account) biira
 bird te mannikiba

birthday bonginibung
 black roroo
 blackboard burakibooti
 blade (razor) te uii ni m'ariro
 blanket burangketi
 blood te raraa
 blue mawaawa
 boat te booti
 body te rab'ata
 book te boki
 bone te rii
 born bungiaki
 borrow v. tangoa
 both uaia; kaka uoman
 box te b'aoki
 boy te roronga; te teinimm'aane
 bread te kariki (ni buraawa)
 break urua, otea, ibea
 breakfast te am'arake n te
 ingaabong
 bridge te buriiti
 bring v. uota
 brother tari; mm'aane
 brown buraaun
 brush te burati
 build v. karaoa, katea
 building te auti; kateitei
 burn v. kabuoka v. t.
 bus te b'ati
 business te mm'akuri ni karikirake
 busy tabetabe
 but ma
 button (te bato), te b'atin
 buy v. kabooa
 by iroun, irarikin

C

cab (taxi) te taekitii	clock te tai
cable (telegram) te uaereti	close kaan; kaina (v.t.)
cake te keeke	clothes kunnikai
call v. wetea	cloud te nang
can (able) konaa	coat te kooti
can (tin) te kaen; tiin	coffee te koobe
can opener te kai ni kaukuuki	coin te maibiibi (m'ane)
car (auto) te kaa	cold m'aitoro
care karaua, m'annanoa	college te reirei ae rietaata
careful karaurau; m'annanoa	color te mata
carry v. uota	comb te koom
cash te m'ane	come v. roko
catch v. rawea	comfortable kamweengaraoi
cause v. karika	common kabuta
centre nuuka	company (business) te kamb'ana
certain eti; koaua	complete katiaa, tia, bobonga
chain te tiein	condition te aro
chair te kaintekateka	continue waaki
chalk te tiaoka	cook kuuka
change v. bita	cool m'aitoro
change kaaibibiti, nikira (te m'ane)	copy katootoonga, kaewea
cheese te tiiti	corner te ningining, maninganinga
chief mataniuii, atuu	cost te boo (boon te b'ai)
child te teei	could konaa
choose v. rinea	count v. wareka
church te um'antabu	country te aba; te marenaua
cigarette te tikareti	course te kooti
circle te mronron	court te kaboouii
city te kaawa ae e buubura	cousin ai tari; ai mm'aane
class te koraki, te rinan	cover rabuna
classroom te ruu ^{reirei} reirei;	cross kaibangaki
um'anreirei	crowd te koraki n aomata
clean itiaki	cry v. tang
clear oota	cup m'angko
climb v. tam'arake	cut v. korea

D

dance b'aatere
 dark roo
 date bongin nam'akaina
 daughter te nati te aiine
 day te bong
 dead mate
 decide v. motika te iango; baaire
 deep nano
 dentist te tia karao uii
 desk te teetike
 diarrhea te bekanako
 die v. mate
 different kaokoro
 difficult kaangaanga
 dining room ruu n am'arake
 dinner te am'arake n te tairiki
 dirty baareka
 discover v. kunea
 dish te am'arake (food);
 te raurau (plate)
 distance te raroa
 do v. karaoa
 doctor te taokita
 dog te kirii, te kamea
 dollar te taaraa
 door te mataroa
 doubt nanokokoraki, nanououa
 down naano
 draw v. koro taamnei
 dry m'auu
 dream mii
 dress karuo
 drink mooii
 drive v. kabuta
 drop v. kab'akaa

during n tain
 dust te bubu

E

each tatabeua
 ear te taninga
 early moantaa
 earth aonnaaba
 east mainiku
 easy beebete
 eat v. kana
 egg te bunnimoo
 eight waniua
 either teuana mai buakon
 electric te iti
 else riki
 end toki
 enemy kairiribai
 engine intin
 enjoy v. kakukureia
 enough tau
 enter v. riin
 erase v. kamaunaa
 even booraoi, toaraoi
 evening tairiki
 ever n aki toki
 every ni katoa
 everything b'aai nako
 except tii
 exciting kakukurei
 expect kaantaninga
 experience atatai
 explain v. kaotaa, kab'arab'araa
 extra te tatara
 eye te mata

F

face te mata, te moamoa
 fact te koaua
 fair booraoi
 faith te onimaki
 fall v. b'aka
 family te utuu
 famous ataaki raoi
 far raroa
 fast waetata
 fat marika
 father te karo, te tama
 favorite taatangiraki riki
 fear maaku
 feel v. namakina
 feet wae
 fence te oo
 fever biiua, mariri
 few tabeua
 fifty nimabui
 fight un
 fill v. kanoaa
 film te birim
 finally kabaneana, motikana
 find v. kunea
 fine (well) raoi
 finger tabonibai
 finish bane
 fire te ai
 first moan
 fish te ika
 five nimaua
 floor te buia, buia
 flower te uee
 fly v. kiba
 follow v. ira, katootoonga

food te am'arake
 foot te buuti; butu (measure);
 wae (body)
 for i bukin
 foreign iruwaa
 forget v. m'aninga
 fork te waiteke
 forward nako mooa
 four aua
 free inaaomata
 fresh menaai, boou
 friend te rao
 from man
 front im'aain
 fruit te uaanikai
 fun te kangare
 funny kakangare
 full on
 future te tai ae e na roko

G

game te takaakaro
 gasoline b'aan te intin
 garden te nnenaroka; oonnaroka
 gate te mataroa n te oo
 gather v. boota
 general ae e kabuta
 get v. karekea
 ghost te anti
 gift te b'aintangira
 girl te teinnaiine
 give v. anga
 glad kukurei
 glass te kiraati
 glass (drinking) m'angko te
 kiraati

glasses (eye) te mata te kiraati
 go v. nako
 god te atua
 gold te koora
 good raoiroi
 government te tautaeka
 grand-daughter te tibu ae te nati
 te aine
 grandfather te tibu te mm'aane
 grandmother te tibu te aine
 grandson te tibu ae te nati te
 mm'aane
 grass te uteute
 great korakora, kakannato
 green kiriin
 grey maawa ni maii
 grocery te tabo ni kaboo
 uaanikai
 ground aontano
 group te b'ariko
 grow v. riki
 guard v. tantanii
 guess keeti, katautau
 guide kaira
 gun katii

H

hair te ira
 haircut koroira
 half itera, m'anang
 hand bai
 hang v. tine; katinea
 happen v. riki
 happy kukurei
 hard matoatoa; kaangaanga
 hat te b'ara
 have v. iai irouu

head atuu
 headache marakin atuu
 health te mauri, marurun g
 hear v. ongo
 heart te buroo
 heat kabuebue
 heavy tinebu, rawaawata
 height te rietaata
 help buoka
 here ikai
 high rietaata
 hire buuta (kaboaki n te m'ane)
 history karaki ni kawai
 hold taua
 hole te b'angab'anga
 home te mweenga
 hope kaantaninga
 hot kabuebue
 hour te aoa
 house te auti
 how kangaa; iraana
 however e ngae ngke
 human te aomata
 humid aom'aim'ai
 hundred te bubua
 hungry baki
 hunt v. kaeman
 hunter te tia kaeman
 hurry kawaetata
 hurt kammaraka
 husband te buu te mm'aane

I

ice te aiti
 idea te iango
 if ngkana arona b'a

ill aoraki
 important kakaawaki, kakannato
 in i nanon
 insect te man ae e uareereke
 instead n oneamwiin
 instruction reirei, kaetieti
 interest kakannoo, kakaongoraa
 into nako nanon
 iron te biti
 island te abam'akoro

J

job te mm'akuri
 join v. raona, tomaa
 joke kangare; manikangare
 joy te kim'aareirei
 juice ranin uaan te kai

K

keep v. kawakina
 key te kiing
 kill v. tiringa, kamatea
 kind te aeka; aakoi
 king te kiing; uea
 kiss kabooria; kiiti, mb'aa
 kitchen te um'anikuuka ruu ni
 kuuka
 knee bubua ni wae
 knife biti
 know v. ataa

L

labor mm'akuri
 lake te nei ae e ab'aab'aki
 land te aba

language te taetae
 large buubura
 last kabane
 late rimwii
 laugh ngare
 laundry te tabo ni uaati
 law te tua
 lay v. bungia; kawenea
 lead v. kaira
 learn v. kekeiaki
 least te kabane
 leave v. kiitana
 left angamaing
 leg te wae
 length te anaanau
 less karako
 lesson te reirei
 let v. kaira
 letter te reta
 lie v. wene; kewe
 life te maiu
 lift v. tabeka
 light beebete; oota (ke te oota)
 like tangira; tiiteboo
 line te ao; te rain
 lip te ria
 listen v. ongoraa
 little uareereke
 live v. maeka
 long anaanau
 look v. taraa
 loose m'aawa, matana
 love v. tangira
 lover te tia tangira
 low rinano
 lower rinano riki

M

machine te mitiin
 magazine te nuutibeeba
 make v. karaoa
 man te mm'aane
 many bati
 map te m'abe
 market te m'aakete
 marry v. m'are, iein
 material te kunnikai
 matter te b'ai ae e riki
 may konaa
 me ngngai
 mean iowaawa
 measure v. baairea
 meat te iriko
 medicine te b'ai n aoraki
 meet v. kaaitiboo
 meeting te bootaki
 member kaain te bootaki
 men mm'aane
 middle nuuka
 mile te maire
 milk te miriki
 million te mirion
 mind te nano
 mine au b'ai
 minute te miniti
 Miss Nei
 Mr (Mister) Ten, Teng, Te, Tem
 Mrs Ms. (Mistress) Nei
 modern boou
 moment te tai
 money te m'ane
 month te nam'akaina
 moon nam'akaina

more riki
 morning te ingaabong
 mosquito te maninnara
 most rangi (angiin)
 mother te tina
 mountain te maunga
 mouth te uii
 move v. buti
 movie te kaotitaamnei
 much m'aiti
 music te katangitang
 must riai

N

name te ara
 nation te bootannaomata
 natural ae bon arona
 nature aron te b'ai; aomata; etc.
 near kaan; i rarikin
 nearly ni kaan; kuri
 necessary riai
 neck te roroa
 need v. kainnanao
 neighbour te itabon; itabon
 neither tiaki teuana mai buakon
 nephew ai te nati te mm'aane
 never tuai men
 new boou
 news rongorongo
 newspaper te nuutibeeba
 next imwiina
 nice raoiroi, tamaaroa
 niece ai te nati te aine (nati)
 night te tairiki, bong
 nine ruaiua
 no tiaki, akea

none akea
 north meaang
 nose te b'airi
 not aki, tiaki
 nothing akea
 notice kaetieti
 now ngkai
 number te namb'a, te ware

O

ocean marawa
 of i, n(i)
 off man
 offer anga; angaanga
 office te aobiti
 officer te aobitia
 often m'aitin te tai
 oil te b'aa
 old kara, mm'aane
 on i aon
 once n te taina
 one teuana
 only tii
 open v. kauka
 opinion te iango
 or (nor) ke
 order ootana; kaooa; kaoa
 other tabeua
 ought riai
 our ara
 out naako
 outside tinaniku
 over riaon
 own b'aina

P

pack v. batii
 pack batia
 page iteranibaa
 pain te maraki
 paint te been
 pair kaka uoua
 pants kawaerake
 paper te beeba
 part m'akoro
 party te bootaki, te b'aatii
 pass katibanakoa
 past ngkoa
 pay v. kab'akaa boona
 peace te raoi
 pen te kaini koroboki
 pencil te bentira
 period te tai
 people aomata
 perhaps tao
 person te aomata
 pick v. rinea
 pick up v. tabekia
 picture te taamnei
 piece te m'akoro
 pillow te uninga
 place te tabo
 plan te baaire
 plant te aroka
 plate te raurau
 play v. takaakaro
 pleasant kakukurei
 pleased kukurei
 pleasure te kakukurei
 point koto; tabon
 poor kaawa, kainnano

position te tabo
 possible konaaki
 post office te aobiti n reta
 practice te kataneiai
 prepare v. katauraoa
 present ngkai; b'aintangira
 president beretitenti
 pretty tikiraoi
 price te boo
 priest te tama
 probably konaa
 problem te kaangaanga
 promise berita
 prove v. kakoaua
 provide v. karekea
 public te bootannaomata
 pull v. katika
 purpose bukin
 put v. katuka, kaaki
 put down v. katuka

Q

quarter kaam'akoro, kuata
 queen te uea n aiine
 question te titiraki
 quickly ni waekoa
 quiet rau; kaabuingoingo; rau
 man te karongoaa, raoi
 quite rangin, kaanga

R

radio reerio
 rain te karau
 raise v. mwemwekia, tabeka
 rather v. tangiria riki

razor te m'ariro
 reach v. roota
 read v. wareka
 ready tauraoi
 real koaua
 realise v. ataa
 really ni koaua
 reason oin rikin bukin te b'ai
 receive v. reke; butim'aaea
 red uraura
 refuse v. rawa
 religion te aro
 remain v. tiku
 remember v. uringa
 rent boon te maeka
 reply v. kaeka
 report tua taekina
 rest v. motirawa
 result mwiina; mwiin
 resume v. moanna
 return v. oki, kaoka
 rich kaub'ai
 ride toka
 right (correct) eti
 right (direction) atai
 river te karaanga
 road te kawai
 rock te b'aa
 room te ruu
 rope te roobu
 round mronron
 rub v. bubua
 run v. biri
 rush kawaetata

S

safe	mano; m'aneaua raoi	sick	aoraki
sail	te ie; borau	side	rarikin
salt	te taari, taoro	sign	v. tiaaina
same	tiiteboo	silver	tirewa
sand	te tano	simple	beebete
save	v. ni kamaui	since	man te tai
say	v. taku, atonga	sing	v. anene
schedule	babaairean te tai	single	tii temanna; temanna
school	te reirei	sister	mm'aane; tari
sea	taari	six	onoua
season	taai i nanon te ririki, e.g. kamariri, kabuebue,	size	ab'aab'akina, buuburana
seat	te kaintekateka	skin	te kun
second	kauoua, kauoman	skirt	te kamumun
see	v. noora	sky	karawa
seem	kaanga e taraa	slacks	kawaerake
sell	v. kabooa nako	sleep	v. matuu
send	v. kanakoa	slip	v. marannako
serve	v. mm'akuri i bukin temanna	slow	waeremwe, karaurau
service	te mm'akuri; te taromauri	slowly	te aro ni karaurau
seven	itiua	small	uareereke
several	tabeua	smell	v. aroka; boi
share	tib'aa	smile	v. matangare
sharp	kakang	smoke	moko
shave	v. imaima (korobuai)	so	ma ngaia are
sheet	te kabu; rabunan te kainiwene	soap	te toobu
ship	te kaibuke	sock	nangoan te wae man te kau; titaoking
shirt	te kabaraaki	soft	maraurau
shoe	te taam'aka; kau ni wae	soil	te tano
shop	te titooa (titooa ni b'ai)	soldier	te tautia
shore	mataniuiin te aba	some	teutana; tabeua
short	kororo, kimototo	something	te b'ai teuana
should	riai	sometimes	tabetai
shoulder	te anga	son	te nati te mm'aane
show	v. kaota	song	te anene
shower	tiaawa	soon	te tai ae aki maan
		sort	kaakoro, rinea; te aeka

soul te taamnei
 sound te b'anaa
 south maiaki
 space te aakea; te marena
 speak v. taetae
 special ae e kaokoro
 spend v. kabanea
 spirit te taamnei
 spoon te buun
 spot te tabo
 spring te koburake n ran; tiburing
 square te tikuea
 stamp te titamb'a
 stand v. teei; tei
 star te itoi
 start v. moanna
 state te aba
 station te tabo
 stay v. tiku
 step v. m'aneke
 step te uta
 stick te kai
 still tabe
 stomach-ache maraki ni bioto
 stone te atiibu
 stop tooki; toki
 store te titooa
 storm te buaka, te ang, te karau,
 etc.
 story te karaki
 straight eti
 strange kamiimii
 stream te karaanga
 street te kawai ae e raababa
 strength te korakora
 strong korakora
 study v. kekeiaki; kamateb'ai

sudden ae e kakuba; karina
 sugar te tioka
 suit tau
 suitcase te b'auti; tuutikeeti
 summer tain te kabuebue
 sun taai
 supper te am'arake n te tairiki
 suppose v. taku, iango
 sure koaua
 surprise v. kamiimii; kakuba
 sweet karewerewe; tikiraoi

T

table te taibora
 take v. anaa
 talk v. taetae
 tall anaana, rietaata
 tape recorder te b'ai n rawe
 b'anaa
 taste katoomam; noora te kangkang
 teach v. reirei
 tea te ii
 tear v. raeuaa
 telegram te uaereti
 telephone te tareboon
 tell v. taekina, tua, atonga
 ten tebuina
 than nakon
 thank kaaitau
 thank you ko rab'a
 the te
 then ngkanne
 there ikekei
 therefore mangaiaare
 thin kairariki, mmanii
 thing te b'ai

think v. iango
 third te kateniua, kateniman, etc.
 thirsty taka
 thirty tenibui
 though ngae n aron aanne
 thought n te iango
 thousand te ngaa
 three teniua
 through rinanon
 thus n aron aei
 ticket tiiketi
 tie v. kabaea
 time te tai
 tire te rab'a
 tired ae e kua
 to nakon
 together ni bane
 tooth te uii
 toothache te maraki ni uii
 toothbrush te burati ni ireuui
 toothpaste te toobu ni ireuui
 tobacco te baakee
 today te bong aei
 toe te taboniwae
 toilet te kainnako taari
 toilet paper te tiraa
 tomorrow ningngaabong
 too naba
 top te taubuki; eeta
 touch v. riinga
 toward ni kaeta
 towel te kaa, te taara
 town te kaawa
 toy te b'ai n takaakaro
 trade iookinib'ai
 translate v. raira nanon

travel v. m'ananga
 tree te kai
 trip te m'ananga
 trouble v. karawaawata
 trouble te kaangaanga
 truck te turaki
 true koaua
 trust v. onimakina
 truth te koaua
 try v. kataa
 turn v. raira
 twelve tebui ma uoua
 twenty uabui
 two uoua
 typewriter taib'araita

U

uncle ai te karo
 under iaan
 underpants te aani kawaerake
 understand v. oota; ataa ongo
 nanon
 until ni karokoa
 up eeta
 upon i aon
 use v. kaboonganana
 usually tataneiai

V

value boonganana te b'ai teuana
 very rangi
 view taraan; nooran
 village te kaawa
 visit v. kawara
 voice te b'anaa

W

wagon te kaa
 wait v. tataninga
 wake up v. uti
 walk v. nakonako
 wall te oo
 wallet te b'auti ni m'ane
 want v. tangira
 war te buaka
 warm buee
 wash v. uaati
 watch v. taratara
 watch (wrist) te tainibai
 water te ran
 wave v. katioa
 wave te nao
 way te kawai
 wear v. kamanenaa; b'aina
 weather angin te bong
 week te wiiki
 weight te rawaawata
 well marurung
 well (water) te manib'a
 west maeao
 wet m'aim'ai
 whether b'a tao
 while ngke
 white mainaina
 whole ae b'anin

wide raababa
 wife te buu te aine
 will na
 wind te ang
 window te kamaama
 wine te wain
 winter tain te m'aitoro
 wish bia; tangira
 with ma
 without n akea
 woman te aine
 wonder miimii
 wonderful kamiimii
 woods te buakonikai
 word te taeka
 work mm'akuri
 world te aonnaaba
 worse buakaka riki
 worth manenan; boongan
 wrong bure

Y

year te ririki
 yellow baabooboo
 yes eeng
 yet ngkai naba
 young ataei

Note: The following Kiribatese/English and English/Kiribatese lexicons have been adapted from Trussel (1979).

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